SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

SALAR | WEDNESDAY| 1 JULY 2026

DON'T LOSE YOUR VOTE: YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO KARNATAKA'S SIR 2026

The Election Commission has begun the SIR of Karnataka's electoral rolls, a exercise that will verify all 5.54 crore registered voters through house-to-house visits. Here's a step-by-step guide to the process

What is SIR?

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is a complete verification of the electoral roll carried out by the Election Commission. Unlike the annual revision, SIR includes:

- House-to-house verification by Booth Level Officers (BLOs).
- Family relationship (progeny) mapping.
- Removal of duplicate, shifted, deceased or incorrect entries.

WHAT IS FAMILY (PROGENY) MAPPING

A key feature of SIR 2026 is family tree linking.
Every voter is mapped to their father, mother or grandparents to eliminate duplicate or ghost voters.

Example
If your Aadhaar shows "Aditya" but your father's name appears differently in the electoral records, the system may fail to establish the relationship.

This can result in your record being flagged as:

- Shifted
- Duplicate
- Deceased
- Unmapped

Such voters may be excluded from the draft electoral roll unless corrected.

PHASES	SCHEDULE
House-to-house verification by BLOs	30 June – 29 July
Draft electoral roll	5 August
Claims & objections	5 Aug – 4 Sept
Hearings / notice phase	5 Aug – 3 Oct
Final electoral roll	7 October

PHASE 1:

Verify your mapping

Voters will be traced to the 2002 electoral roll.
Possible relationships include:

- Son.
- Daughter.
- Grandson.
- Granddaughter.

There is no daughter-in-law option in Karnataka.
Unlike some states where voters could link themselves to any relative in the 2002 roll, Karnataka allows linkage only through:

- Parents.
- Grandparents.

If your parents or grandparents voted in another Assembly Constituency in 2002, you must locate their 2002 voter record yourself.

You can check the 2002 voter list online:

1. Visit https://voters.eci.gov.in
2. Click Search Your Name
3. Select:
   - State.
   - District.
   - Assembly Constituency.
4. Enter your name to check your linkage status.

PHASE 2:

Fill the Enumeration Form (EF)

Every voter must submit the Enumeration Form.
The BLO will visit each house and provide two copies:

- One for submission.
- One signed copy for your records.

Step 1: Some of the details will be pre-printed

- Verify your name, current Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC) number, and home address.
- Ensure the pre-printed photo is clear. If it is outdated, affix a recent passport-size photograph (maximum 2 MB).

Step 2: Establish family mapping

Choose one of the two mandatory lineage options to prevent being flagged as a duplicate or ghost voter:

- Self-Mapping: Provide your own voter list details if you were registered in 2002.
- Progeny Mapping: If you were not registered in 2002, enter the 2002 voter details and EPIC numbers of your parents or grandparents to establish family tree linkage.

Step 3: Fill current details

Provide:

- Date of Birth.
- Aadhaar number.
- Mobile number.
- EPIC numbers of other living family members in your household.

Step 4: Sign & submit

- Read the declaration.
- Sign (or provide a thumb impression).
- If absent, an adult family member may sign, mentioning the relationship.
- Submit the form to the BLO.
- Ensure the BLO signs your acknowledgement copy.

What happens if you are not at home?

BLOs must visit every household in their assigned polling part at least twice, first to distribute the enumeration forms and then to collect the completed forms.

If a voter is unavailable, the BLO must make at least three attempts to contact them before marking the voter as 'Absent'.

You can also submit the Enumeration Form online

The form can also be submitted through:

- Voter Portal: **https://voters.eci.gov.in/login**
- ECINET Mobile App

1. Login

- Register/Login using your mobile number.
- Verify via OTP.

2. Fetch electoral details

- Click Fill Enumeration Form.
- Select your State.
- Enter your 10-digit EPIC number.
- Verify the pre-filled details.

3. Verify mobile

Enter your mobile number and complete OTP verification.

4. Complete family mapping

Choose one:

- Option A: Self-mapping (already in the 2002 roll).
- Option B: Parent/Grandparent mapping.
- Option C: Neither you nor your parents were in the 2002 roll.

5. Fill current details

Provide:

- Date of Birth.
- Aadhaar Number.
- Upload a photo (optional if the existing photo is correct).

Preview the application before submission.

6. Aadhaar e-sign

- Submit the form.
- Complete Aadhaar OTP verification.
- Save the application reference number.

After the Enumeration Forms are submitted, the next phase is the publication of the Draft Electoral Roll.

PHASE 3:

Draft electoral roll

The Draft Electoral Roll will be published on 5 August.
If:

- your 2002 linkage is established,
- you have submitted the Enumeration Form,
- your name should appear in the draft roll.

If a voter is absent, shifted, deceased or found to be a duplicate, their name may be removed.

If your name is missing, you will receive a notice.

However, voters should not rely only on notices. Check the draft roll yourself on the EC's website.

Logical discrepancies

Even if your name appears in the draft roll, the ECI may flag it for "logical discrepancies" requiring further verification.
Common reasons include:

- Name spelling mismatch.
- Different parent names compared to previous records.
- Parent-child age gap below 15 years or above 50 years.
- Grandparent-grandchild age gap below 40 years.
- Less than nine months' gap between two siblings mapped to the same parents.
- Six or more children mapped to one parent.
- Incorrect age progression since the 2002 roll.
- Failure to establish family mapping.
- Submission without supporting documents.
- Cases where only Aadhaar has been provided.

A logical discrepancy does not automatically delete your name. It simply means further verification is required.

If flagged

The Assistant Electoral Registration Officer (AERO) or Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) will:

- Issue a notice.
- Call you for a hearing.
- Ask you to provide one of the 11 documents listed by the EC as proof under SIR.
- Conduct another BLO verification, if required.

Documents that are proof for SIR

- Birth certificate.
- Passport.
- Educational certificate by recognised boards/universities.
- Permanent residence certificate issued by state authorities.
- Caste certificate.
- Forest rights certificate.
- Aadhaar.
- Land or house allotment certificate.
- NRC entry (where applicable).
- Govt family register.
- Identity card/certificate/document issued before July 1, 1987, by govt department, local authority, LIC, PSU bank or post office.
- Identity card/pension payment order issued to regular employee/pensioner of central/state govt or PSUs.

Note: Aadhaar is accepted only as proof of identity, not as proof of age or citizenship.

PHASE 4:

CLAIMS & OBJECTIONS

If your name is excluded from the draft roll, you can file claims or objections.
You will be required to attend a hearing and submit one of the 11 documents enlisted by SIR as proof of citizenship. In many states, these hearings were not conducted on a regular basis.

- Form 6 (Claims for inclusion): Used if your name is missing from the Draft Roll or if you failed to submit your Enumeration Form (EF) during the doorstep survey.
- Form 7 (Objections to inclusion/deletion): Used to object to the inclusion of an ineligible person (for example, someone who has passed away, permanently migrated or is a ghost voter).

- Form 8 (corrections & shifting): Used to correct logical discrepancies, spelling mistakes, age, photograph or change of address within or outside the constituency.

PHASE 5: FINAL ELECTORAL ROLL PUBLICATION

Who is most likely to face verification issues?

- Tenants and recent migrants.
- People with name mismatches across documents.
- Families using different initials or surnames.
- Senior citizens unavailable during BLO visits.
- Voters with incomplete or outdated records.

Can you lose your vote even if you have a voter ID?
A voter ID alone does not guarantee inclusion in the electoral roll. If your records cannot be verified or discrepancies remain unresolved, your case may be subject to further scrutiny.

Why are applications rejected?

- Wrong form submitted.
- Name mismatch across records.
- Invalid or unclear documents.
- Incomplete address proof.
- Missing family linkage.

What should voters do?

- Check your name in the electoral roll.
- Verify your personal and family details.
- Correct errors immediately.
- Keep supporting documents ready.
- Submit the appropriate statutory form, if required.
- Check your voter details early.
- Correct errors before the final roll is published.
- Ensure names, addresses and family details are consistent across all records.
- Do not assume that a voter ID alone guarantees inclusion in the electoral roll.

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DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGN

BLOs say locating residents can be challenging as SIR begins in Delhi

As the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) got underway in Delhi on Tuesday, booth-level officers (BLOs) fanned out across neighbourhoods to distribute enumeration forms, saying that the exercise is expected to become more demanding in the coming days due to difficulties in locating residents and ensuring every household is covered.

More than 13,000 BLOs began the door-to-door exercise across Delhi's 70 Assembly constituencies as part of the Election Commission's voter verification drive that will continue till July 29.

Mahendra Kumar, a BLO engaged in distributing forms, said the field exercise had entered its final stage with officials visiting households to hand over enumeration forms.

"The final stage of the SIR has started today. We have been given enumeration forms to distribute door-to-door," he said.

He said he had mapped the area under his polling booth during the first phase of the SIR.

Another BLO deployed in Subhash Mohalla under the Babarpur Assembly constituency said the exercise had started around 10am and was physically demanding.

"We started distributing the enumeration forms around 10 am today, and it's been quite exhausting. This area has a mixed population and mostly permanent houses, but locating the correct addresses is often a challenge.", he said.

In many cases, residents are either not at home or do not respond despite repeated knocks, so we have to return later. Since this is only the first day of the exercise, we expect the work to become more demanding in the coming days as we try to ensure every household is covered, the BLO added.

Residents said the BLOs were helping them understand the forms and complete the required details.

"The BLO explained the form to us and helped us fill it. We have also been given a contact number to reach the official if we need any further assistance," a resident said.

According to officials at the Delhi Chief Electoral Officer's (CEO) office, BLOs have been instructed to carry out door-to-door visits early in the morning and in the evening, including on Saturdays and Sundays, when residents are more likely to be at home.

Recognised political parties are also participating in the exercise through their booth-level agents (BLAs), who will assist voters in filling and submitting the forms.

Delhi has 13,033 polling stations spread across seven Lok Sabha constituencies and 70 Assembly segments.

During the SIR exercise, each voter will be provided with two copies of the enumeration form. One copy will be retained by the voter as an acknowledgement, while the other will be returned to the BLO. No documents are required to be submitted along with the forms.

The forms must be filled by every voter to ensure that their names are included in the final electoral roll, which is scheduled to be published on 7 October.

According to the CEO's office, names of voters who do not submit the forms will not appear in the draft electoral roll to be published on 5 August.

Officials said each BLO would make at least three visits to households found locked during the survey.

Delhi has 1.45 crore registered voters, including 77.11 lakh men and 67.98 lakh women.

The electoral rolls were frozen on June 16, by which date the capital had 1,45,10,298 registered electors.

Electors who shifted to Delhi after 2002 will be required to provide details of the last SIR conducted in their native state where they were previously registered as voters. The electoral rolls of all states are available on the Election Commission's portal.

Voters also have the option of submitting their enumeration form details online. —*PTI*

NATION

Kharif sowing down 23 pc, only 26 pc water in dams

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BUSINESS

OYO parent firm Prism files for Rs 6,650 cr IPO

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SPORTS

Paraguay sends Germany out of World Cup

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | 1 JULY 2026 | WEDNESDAY | BENGALURU | 15 MUHARRAM 1448 H | Vol 5 | Issue No 170 | Pages: 8

US SC upholds ban on trans girls in school sports

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

The Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld state laws barring transgender girls and women from playing on school athletic teams, in another setback for transgender people. The court's conservative majority, which has repeatedly ruled against transgender Americans in the past year, ruled that state bans in Idaho and West Virginia don't violate the Constitution or the federal law known as Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination in education. More than two dozen other Republican-led states have adopted bans on female transgender athletes, and the decision seems certain to extend to them as well. *—PTI*

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Lose vote, lose benefits: DKS warns as K'taka SIR begins

CM says people must update phone numbers

BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has begun in Karnataka from Tuesday, with Chief Minister DK Shivakumar warning citizens to ensure their names remain on the voter list or risk losing access to government benefits.

Describing the right to vote as fundamental, he said, "The right to vote is the right to live." He added that in West Bengal, orders have been issued to verify and remove ineligible ration beneficiaries based on SIR, and similar measures are being adopted in other states. "If you lose the right to vote, you'll lose government benefits," he cautioned.

The Election Commission will conduct a house-to-house enumeration exercise across Karnataka from Tuesday, continuing until 29 July, as part of the revision process.

To assist citizens, the state government has announced the issuance of permanent residential certificates. The Revenue Department has released guidelines stating that these certificates will serve as valid proof of residence. Applications can be made online via the Seva Sindhu portal or offline through service centres such as Atal Jana Snehi Kendras, Nadakacheris, Bengaluru One, Karnataka One, and Grama One centres.

Kicking off the SIR process, Shivakumar and his wife Usha Shivakumar filled out the enumeration form at their residence in the presence of Bengaluru South officials. He said voters must provide the phone number used while obtaining their voter ID, and that any changes in phone numbers would be updated by officials. An OTP would be sent for verification.

He also noted that one family member can fill and sign enumeration forms on behalf of all members. Voters may also update their name or photograph while submitting forms. Both online and offline submission options have been made available, including assistance from Booth Level Officers (BLOs), to address digital illiteracy. He further stated that government benefits should primarily reach verified voters, adding that the state aims to ensure welfare schemes are directed to eligible residents of Karnataka. *—Salar News*

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CM DK Shivakumar and his wife Usha Shivakumar fill up the enumeration form at their residence in Bengaluru on Tuesday *—SALAR*

23 PARTIES WRITE TO CJI ON SIR

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Twenty-three political parties and an Independent MP on Tuesday sent a joint letter to Chief Justice of India Surya Kant raising concerns over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process and the role of the Election Commission.

The letter follows a 8 June INDIA bloc meeting and has been signed by leaders including Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee, Tejashwi Yadav, Akhilesh Yadav, Hemant Soren, Omar Abdullah and Kapil Sibal, among others. Leaders said AAP and DMK also signed the letter. Opposition parties said the move reflects reliance on the judiciary when other institutions fail, and raised concerns over the SIR process across states. *—PTI*

'RESULTS ONLY NEXT YEAR'

Ethanol mixing an experiment: Govt to SC

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The government on Tuesday told the Supreme Court that India's ethanol blending programme in petrol remains an "ongoing experiment", adding that its full impact will become clearer next year, even as it maintained that the policy will continue despite concerns.

The submission came during a hearing on a plea filed by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), which has challenged a Karnataka High Court order relating to ethanol allocation for the Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26. The Supreme Court issued notice on the plea and directed status quo on the High Court's order, which had asked oil marketing companies to consider a representation seeking enhanced ethanol allocation.

The High Court had held that dedicated ethanol producers, contracted under long-term agreements, could not be denied preferential allocation benefits, and directed BPCL, Hindustan Petroleum and Indian Oil Corporation to examine the issue.

Attorney General R Venkataramani told the court that the High Court ruling would destabilise the national blending policy. He said the 20 per cent ethanol blending programme is still evolving, its outcomes are not yet fully known, and ethanol supply contracts concluded in October 2025 had already attained finality. Allocation for 2025-26, he said, covered 378 suppliers and about 1,050 crore litres, of which 680 crore litres had already been supplied.

He warned that revisiting allocations for one supplier could trigger similar claims and open the floodgates of litigation. The government, however, said there is no evidence that E20 petrol causes mechanical damage, and maintained that the policy supports energy security, farmers' incomes and environmental goals. *—Salar News*

AFTER VIRAL VIDEO, GOVT DENIES POLLUTION BY ETHANOL PLANTS

SHILLONG, 30 JUNE

The Meghalaya State Pollution Control Board (MSPCB) on Tuesday said its inspection of an ethanol and distillery unit in Byrnihat found no violation of prescribed emission standards, following public concern triggered by a viral documentary.

The probe was initiated suo motu after social media posts and a video by YouTuber **Sarthak Goswami** alleged severe pollution in Byrnihat, an industrial town on the Meghalaya–Assam border that was ranked among the world's most polluted metropolitan areas in the 2024 IQAir report. The video also questions the "green fuel" narrative promoted by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and the Centre, which markets ethanol blending (E20/E100) as an eco-friendly measure to reduce emissions.

Video shows thick smoke from chimneys, black soot covering vegetation, and claims of toxic dust damaging crops (**in pic**). The creator also notes that particulate matter allegedly affected drone sensors during filming.

Local residents interviewed in the video report rising respiratory illnesses, asthma cases and other health problems, and claim pollution has worsened after industrial expansion. *—PTI*

Gen Dhiraj Seth takes charge as Army Chief

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

General Dhiraj Seth, an accomplished military officer with the rare distinction of heading two operational Army commands along the western front, took charge as the new Chief of the Army Staff on Tuesday. Gen Seth assumed the reins of the 1.3 million-strong force at a time when it is trying to become a self-reliant, future-ready Army. The general officer succeeded General Upendra Dwivedi, who retired on Tuesday after an illustrious career spanning over 40 years. Gen Seth is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla. He was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986. and institutional domains, contributing significantly to the Army's combat effectiveness. *– PTI*

Gor downplays Pacific Command name row

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor has downplayed the controversy over the renaming of the Indo-Pacific Command, saying the "name on the letterhead" is irrelevant compared to actual cooperation between the two countries.

Gor said India continues to conduct more military exercises with the United States than any other country.

His remarks came amid a row triggered after the US restored the original "Pacific Command" name, reversing the earlier "Indo-Pacific Command" designation introduced during President Donald Trump's first term.

He rejected suggestions that bilateral ties had weakened. "To all those pundits online who say this relationship is in trouble, the facts show otherwise," he said.

MODI–TRUMP 6AM CALL ANECDOTE

Gor also recalled an interaction involving Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a UFC event in Miami, saying Trump suggested calling Modi at 6am in India.

"I said, 'Sir, it's 6am there.' He said, 'Modi will be up. He is like me,'" Gor said, adding that the call was eventually scheduled for the following day. Gor added that Trump attaches great importance to ties with India. "When you're friends with somebody, not everything has to be scheduled," Gor said. *—PTI*

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'B'desh to implement Teesta plan at any cost'

DHAKA, 30 JUNE

Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on Monday declared the Teesta Barrage Master Plan a national priority, saying it would be implemented "at any cost", while confirming strong Chinese backing for the project.

Rahman, who recently returned from Beijing, said China had assured "unwavering support no matter how the world changes". The China-backed initiative, aimed at river management, flood control and irrigation, has raised strategic concerns in India due to its proximity to the Siliguri Corridor — India's narrow land link to the Northeast, often referred to as the "Chicken's Neck".

The Teesta originates in Sikkim, flows through West Bengal and enters Bangladesh before joining the Brahmaputra. India–Bangladesh talks on Teesta water-sharing have remained unresolved for over 15 years.

China, responding to concerns, said its cooperation with Bangladesh "does not target any third party". During Rahman's visit, he met Chinese Water Resources Minister Li Guoying, who reportedly expressed support and offered technical assistance for water management. India has previously flagged Chinese involvement in projects near sensitive border zones, with strategic experts warning of implications for the security of the Siliguri Corridor. *—Agencies*

PM-Kisan 'glitch' gives M'rashtra farmer just '1 paisa'

BHANDARA, 30 JUNE

A Maharashtra farmer's hope for a timely stipend under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme turned into confusion when a message on her phone claimed that her account had been credited with just one paisa, a far cry from the expected Rs 2,000.

The Agriculture Department, however, clarified on Tuesday that the message was a technical error and that the correct instalment had already been processed.

Speaking to TV channels on Monday, Khemraj Girepunje, the son of the 65-year-old beneficiary from Jevanala in Bhandara district, said the family was stunned when his mother, Lakshmibai, received the message stating that Rs 0.01 had been credited to her account under the scheme.

He claimed that they urgently needed the money as the kharif season was beginning.

Bhandara district agriculture officer Sangita clarified that the message may have been sent due to a technical error. *— PTI*

AP FLOOD TOLL RISES TO 4 AS OVER 90,000 AFFECTED

ITANAGAR, 30 JUNE

The flood situation in Arunachal Pradesh has worsened, with the death toll rising to four and 21 others injured, affecting nearly all 28 districts, authorities reported on Tuesday. The State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) said two people remain missing amid heavy rain, flash floods, and landslides over the past week, damaging homes, roads, bridges, and infrastructure.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Union ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Kiren Rijiju visited Keyi Panyor district for an aerial and ground assessment.

Since 24 June, approximately 90,499 people in 251 villages across 202 circles have been impacted, with Upper Siang most affected. The SEOC reported 342 kutcha houses, 82 pucca houses damaged, and significant losses to crops and livestock. Rescue efforts continue, with relief camps and supplies being distributed. *—PTI*

GOVT TO APPOINT MORE VET S

B'luru to sterilise 90K dogs annually to check stray crisis

BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

Greater Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda has directed officials to prepare a comprehensive action plan to achieve 100 per cent Animal Birth Control (ABC) coverage across the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) within the next three years, by doubling the city's annual sterilisation capacity from 45,000 to 90,000 stray dogs.

To achieve this, the Minister directed officials to expand infrastructure, engage more implementing agencies, appoint additional veterinarians and encourage participation from organisations across Karnataka and the country.

Byre Gowda also became visibly upset with the 19 officials of the Animal Husbandry Department at the meeting for coming without adequate data, especially about the unchanged stray population despite a 20-year sterilisation drive.

"Are you joking around there? What is the expenditure for five years?" he asked, adding that their responses amounted to "vague and illogical explanations."

CITIZEN-LED GREEN BENGALURU MISSION

The Minister further announced an urban greening programme under which 64,130 saplings will be planted across Bengaluru during the current financial year, with active participation from municipal corporations, citizens and Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) for long-term maintenance and survival of the saplings.

CITIZENS URGED TO USE 'SAHAYA' APP

Citizens have been encouraged to report tree-related safety concerns through the 'Sahaya' application for time-bound disposal and status tracking of complaints.

ENCROACHMENTS

The Minister added that the ongoing footpath clearance drive is aimed at improving pedestrian safety and is not intended to displace street vendors. He urged shop owners to voluntarily remove illegal encroachments from footpaths. *—Salar News*

Ahead of key poll, Sena (UBT) leader joins Shinde camp

MUMBAI, 30 JUNE

In a fresh setback for Uddhav Thackeray, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sachin Ahir on Tuesday filed his nomination for deputy chairman of the Maharashtra legislative council on behalf of the rival Eknath Shinde-led faction.

The move, surprising as Ahir is a close confidant of Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray, comes days after six MPs left the opposition party for the ruling Shiv Sena. Sena (UBT) leader Ambadas Danve confirmed MLC Jagannath Abhyankar as the Maha Vikas Aghadi nominee. Uday Samant said, "Sachin Ahir is a senior MLC and he has raised his voice for the people of Mumbai. I am happy that such an experienced leader is coming with the Shiv Sena." *—PTI*

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— PTI

Coast Guard rescues 6 fishers near Mangaluru

MANGALURU, 30 JUNE

The Indian Coast Guard successfully rescued six fishermen from a distressed boat off the Suratkal coast near Mangaluru. The rescue operation was launched after the vessel, Manju Matha, sent a VHF distress call reporting hull damage and flooding about 33 nautical miles from the coast. The Coast Guard ship ICGS Sachet responded immediately, reaching the vessel within 90 minutes despite rough seas, strong winds, poor visibility and approaching darkness. The crew deployed remote-operated lifebuoys, rescuing all six fishermen without injuries by around 6pm. The fishermen were brought to New Mangalore and are now receiving shelter. The 10.97m fibreglass boat, built in 2019 and registered in Udupi, was involved in the rescue. —*PTI*

Belagavi man kills brother over land dispute

BELAGAVI, 30 JUNE

A dispute over the sale of agricultural land allegedly resulted in a fatal attack when a man killed his younger brother in Belagavi district on Monday. The incident took place in Ghodageri village, Hukkeri taluk. The deceased was identified as Raju Siddappa Rudrappagol, 45, and the accused as his elder brother, Sanju Rudrappagol, 49, police reported. Belagavi Superintendent of Police K. Ramarajan stated, "The brothers had been quarrelling over the proposed sale of three acres of family-owned land in Ghodageri in Hukkeri taluk." During the altercation, Sanju reportedly attacked Raju with a stone before strangling him to death. Both brothers worked as daily wage labourers and resided in an abandoned building in Ankalgi village, Gokak taluk. —*SALAR NEWS*

4 Nepalese held after fight outside Vidhana Soudha

BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

Four Nepalese nationals were arrested following a fight outside Vidhana Soudha, police said on Tuesday. The incident occurred around 5.45pm on Sunday, after an argument over photographs turned physical. Police reported that the dispute began when one group accused the other of obstructing their photography. The verbal altercation soon escalated into a fight, attracting bystanders and a video of the incident later went viral on social media. Vidhana Soudha police intervened, and all four are in custody. —*PTI*

In an extramarital affair, army man kills wife

BIDAR, 30 JUNE

A 26-year-old woman was allegedly murdered by her husband after she questioned his suspected extramarital relationship in Bidar district. The accused, Bhagavat Gyaneshwar Biradar, an Indian Army personnel, allegedly assaulted his wife Sanjana with an iron rod near a forest close to Gayamukha Temple in Bhalki taluk. Police said the couple, married for two years, lived in Shivanagar, Bidar. Sanjana's family alleged Bhagavat was involved with a neighbouring woman and frequently fought with her over the issue. On 25 June, he allegedly took Sanjana to temples before attacking her near Jagadeshwari Mutt. She succumbed to her injuries on Monday. Her family alleged he had attempted to poison her. —*SALAR NEWS*

Door-to-door SIR exercise kicks off

12L enumeration forms distributed; 68,123 officials deployed

BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

The door-to-door house enumeration exercise under the SIR of electoral rolls began on Tuesday in Karnataka, with more than 5.54 crore electors set to be covered till 29 July.

The enumeration drive started with Chief Minister DK Shivakumar who filled up his enumeration form at his residence, along with his wife Usha Shivakumar, in the presence of Bengaluru South Deputy Commissioner and other officials.

On day one, 12,48,314 Enumeration Forms (EFs) were distributed, 47,817 were digitised and 6,840 were submitted online. Permanently shifted electors were 116, a release by the CEO's office said.

The exercise is to prepare a clean and flawless electoral roll for the upcoming elections to ensure undeserving voters do not find a place in it.

Booth Level Officers (BLOs) carry SIR enumeration forms as the exercise began in the State on Tuesday —*SALAR*

Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer V Anbukkumar urged voters to actively participate in the exercise, submit their enumeration forms and update their mobile numbers to ensure their electoral records remain current.

The draft electoral roll will be published on 5 August. Claims and objections can be submitted between 5 August to 4 September. Notices will be issued and claims and objections disposed of between 5 August and 3 October. The final electoral roll will be published on 7 October.

Deputy Tahsildars, Tahsildars or other authorised officers will serve as issuing authorities, while appeals will lie before the Assistant Commissioner within 30 days and revision petitions before the Deputy Commissioner within 60 days.

"We have deployed 68,123 officials, such as 59,050 booth level officers, 7,556 booth level supervisors and 224 electoral registration officers. All officers have been trained and are ready to undertake this exercise," Anbukkumar said.

He said political parties had appointed around 1.15 lakh booth-level agents.

The State government had announced that Permanent Residence Certificates (PRCs) are a proof of permanent residence and will be issued to those. —*PTI*

Chief Electoral Officer V Anbukkumar collects his enumeration form on Tuesday —*SALAR*

SIR FORMS TO REACH ALL VOTERS, MAPPED OR UNMAPPED: CEO

BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer V Anbukkumar on Tuesday said that the BLOs would deliver enumeration forms to the doors of all eligible voters under the SIR of electoral rolls, including those whose voter records are yet to be mapped, and urged people to return the filled-in forms by 29 July. At least 5.09 crore of the 5.56 crore voters have been mapped.

Speaking to reporters after receiving and submitting his own enumeration form at his residence, Anbukkumar clarified that voters were not required to submit any documents during the enumeration stage. "At the enumeration stage, all voters only need to fill in the information already available in the 2002 electoral roll".

He also reiterated that submitting a photograph was not mandatory. "If the existing photograph is old, please provide a new one".

BLOs can take a fresh photograph using their mobile phones if a voter did not have one readily available.

However, he said only those whose names figured in the electoral roll as on 16 June, 2026, would receive enumeration forms at their registered addresses. The CEO added that the qualifying date is 1 October, 2026, and those attaining the age of 18 years by then could submit Form 6 for inclusion in the electoral roll. —*PTI*

Cong objecting to deleting dead voters: Ashoka

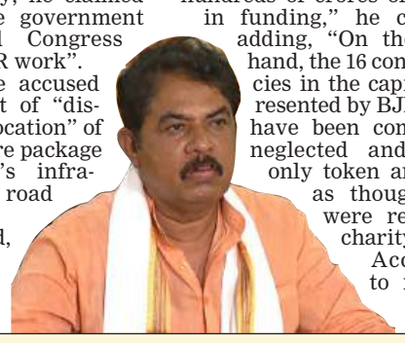
BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R Ashoka alleged that the State government was not properly coordinating with the Election Commission of India (ECI) and was obstructing to the deletions of dead, double entries, and "illegal Bangladeshi immigrants".

Speaking to media on Tuesday, he alleged that the State government was creating bureaucratic hurdles for polling agents.

Simultaneously, he claimed that "the State government has appointed Congress agents to the SIR work".

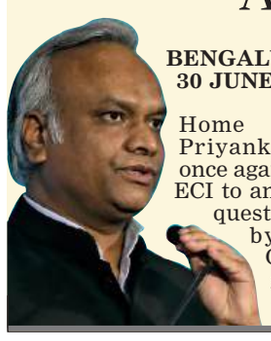
Separately, he accused the government of "discriminatory allocation" of the Rs 2,000 crore package for Bengaluru's infrastructure and road development.



"On one hand, constituencies represented by Congress MLAs have received hundreds of crores of rupees in funding," he claimed, adding, "On the other hand, the 16 constituencies in the capital represented by BJP MLAs have been completely neglected and given only token amounts, as though they were receiving charity."

According to reports, the allocation list shows that constituencies represented by Congress MLAs, such as Chamarajpet, Gandhi Nagar, Vijayanagar, Shanthinagar, Hebbal, Govindaraja Nagar, Pulakeshi Nagar, Shivajinagar, BTM Layout, Sarvagnanagar and Byatarayanapura, have each been allocated Rs 100 crore, while allocations for BJP-represented constituencies range from Rs 40 crore to Rs 80 crore. —*Agencies*

ANSWER OUR QUERIES ON SIR EXERCISE: PRIYANK TO ECI



BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

Home Minister Priyank Kharge once again asked the ECI to answer the 12 questions asked by the Congress government earlier.

These questions or demands by the Karnataka Cabinet last month include:

- Explanation for every discrepancy criterion, including 'logical discrepancies', along with the algorithm or software used.
- Clarity on admissible documents (eg, Aadhaar), and use Kutumba ID as document proof.
- Extend enumeration timeline to 3 months.
- Prohibit voter challenges or notices without a prior field verification.
- Don't drop voters over minor spelling errors.
- Conduct an independent review of the SIR process.
- Block bulk Form-7 objections and process Form-6 applications alongside it.
- Make machine-readable daily data publicly accessible.
- Prohibit opaque AI tools and share all software used.
- Define the roles of Special Roll Observers and Micro-Observers.
- Safeguard rights of women, migrant workers, tribals, transgenders, orphans, etc.

"What we are saying is include everyone who is eligible," Priyank told reporters on Tuesday. "Let the ECI point out which of our 12 questions is illogical, unconstitutional or illegal. We are ready?"

He asked why the BJP was always responding on behalf of the ECI. "If you ask the Election Commission a question, the BJP answers.

If you ask the RSS a question, the BJP answers. Except for matters concerning their own party, they answer everything else. Isn't that strange?" —*Agencies*

Clashes shock Haveri during Kara Hunnime

HAVERI, 30 JUNE

Eight people were injured in a clash triggered by a quarrel over the bursting of crackers during a bull procession organised as part of the Kara Hunnime festival at Naregal village in Hangal taluk on Monday, police said on Tuesday. Home Minister Priyank Kharge said the incident occurred when a procession was passing in front of a mosque.

Kara Hunnime is a traditional agricultural festival celebrated mainly in North Karnataka on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Jyeshtha.

Officials clarified that the incident began as a quarrel between two individuals and later escalated into a clash, and denying any communal angle to the incident. Sharp weapons were allegedly used, leaving eight people injured.

"We have registered a case in connection with the clash and the situation is under control," a senior police officer said.

However, Karnataka BJP President Vijayendra Yediyurappa said that it was a communal clash, alleging on X that there were elements of a "conspiracy".

"The (Congress) government's appeasement politics has emboldened anti-social forces to carry out such a horrific attack on farmers who were celebrating the festival in accordance with the State's traditions," he posted. —*PTI*

JAYAMAHAL ALERT

Hundrerds of fish were found dead at a pond at Jayamahal Park in Bengaluru on Tuesday. The cause is unkown —*MOHAMMED ASAD*

To make K'taka drug-free by 2028, CM offers reward

BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday said that the government is working to make the State drug free by 2028.

Speaking after inaugurating the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking programme organised by the Karnataka State Police Department, he said that the government has decided to reward members of the public and parents who provide confidential information about drug consumption and trafficking.

"Do not conceal such issues because of concerns about your family's reputation," he said. "The more you hide your child's addiction, the more you endanger their future. Instead, counsel them and work with the police to identify the source of the drugs. This will help protect your children from these criminal networks."

He added that the identities of children will stay confidential.

Citing a World Health Organisation report, he said nearly 13 to 14 lakh people die every year in India due to tobacco consumption, and doubled down on his threats against adulterated pan masala, saying that it was being deliver to homes through phone-based delivery networks. He added that over the past three years, the government had destroyed Rs 89 crore worth of drugs.

The government also launched two initiatives. Operation RISE (Refuse, Inform, Support, Empower), which aims to combat drug abuse through coordinated action by Police, Revenue, Transport, Health, Higher Education and other departments. The Beda Bro (No Bro) campaign targets young people with relatable messages highlighting the consequences of drug abuse. —*PTI*

CM DK Shivakumar looks at art on mental wellness during an International Day Against Drug Abuse event, at Kanteerava Stadium —*MOHAMMED ASAD*

'Will pay contractor dues in 2 months'

Karnataka State Contractors' Association President Manjunath told press that CM DK Shivakumar promised to clear the pending bills in "two to three months". The Association said that they have an outstanding payment of around Rs 37,000 crores, and launched protests.

TN to move SC against Mekedatu

DK Shivakumar told officials that the Tamil Nadu government was going to raise objections before the Supreme Court over the Mekedatu dam by citing "minor technical issues", the CMO stated. He directed officials to examine if such technical issues exist and resolve them.

VTU declares engineering results 5 minutes after exam

BELAGAVI, 30 JUNE

Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) has achieved a remarkable feat by declaring its sixth-semester BE. and B.Tech examination results within five minutes of the exam's conclusion, setting a new benchmark in result processing speed. Results were jointly announced by Vice-Chancellor Prof. S. Vidyashankar, Registrar (Evaluation) Prof. UJ Ujwal, and Registrar Dr. Prasad B Rampure on Tuesday.

A total of 60,856 students appeared for the exams, which ended at 5.30pm, and the results were declared at 5.35pm, with an overall pass percentage of 76.84 per cent. The university stated that the entire evaluation process was completed 21 days earlier than usual, thanks to its digital evaluation system and streamlined procedures.

Prof. Vidyashankar said, "VTU prioritised early result declaration to reduce student waiting times," referencing previous achievements such as declaring final-year results within 10 minutes in 2026.

Officials highlighted VTU's recent milestones, including results for 56,000 final-year students in 2026 within 10 minutes and results for 50,321 students in 2025 within an hour.

The sixth-semester results of 58,232 students in 2024–25 were announced 10 days after exams. Registrar Prof. UJ Ujwal credited the digital framework and coordinated efforts for this rapid result declaration. —*Salar News*

B'luru-Mysuru infra corridor causing human-animal conflicts: Officials to CM

BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

Officials told Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday that the construction of the Bengaluru–Mysore Infrastructure Corridor had obstructed the traditional movement routes of elephants, tigers and leopards and was driving the human-animal conflict.

Officials informed a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Karnataka State Wildlife Board at Vidhana Soudha, which Shivakumar is the Chairman of, that tiger and leopard densities were higher in the eco-tourism and safari zones of Bandipur and Nagarahole than in areas witnessing high levels of human-wildlife conflict.

They said that when permission was granted for the construction of the Bengaluru–Mysuru Expressway, it was subject to the condition that the required underpasses, overpasses and wildlife corridors be built to facilitate the safe movement of wildlife. But these were not fully complied with, they added.

In response, Shivakumar directed officials to resume safari and eco-tourism activities in Bandipur and Nagarahole national parks with appropriate safety measures in place. The parks were shut following a spate of human-animal conflicts at the forest-border areas.

He directed the officials concerned to prioritise public safety. —*Salar News*

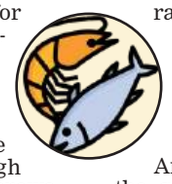
'SEAFOOD AT DOOR'

Govt app to home deliver seafood

BENGALURU, 30 JUNE

The Karnataka Fisheries Development Corporation (KFDC) is set to commercially launch its 'Seafood at Doorsteps' e-commerce platform, enabling consumers to order fresh, hygienically processed and ready-to-cook seafood online while creating better market opportunities for fishing communities.

The platform will directly connect fish producers with consumers, reducing dependence on middlemen and improving incomes for fishermen, fish farmers, Self-Help Groups and Fish Farmer Producer Companies.



Developed on Shopify, it will be accessible through mobile and desktop browsers without requiring a separate app. Customers can browse products, pay online, and choose free pickup or home delivery within a 5km radius for a flat Rs 49 fee.

KFDC said the pilot phase, including logistics testing and staff training, has been completed successfully. Future plans include Android and iOS apps, as the government says it will boost economic opportunities. —*PTI*

Cong stopped from visiting Ram temple

UP Cong Chief alleges house arrests; Jairam questions Modi's silence over the fund scam

AYODHYA/RAMPUR, 30 JUNE

Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajay Rai and a party delegation were on Tuesday prevented from visiting the Ram temple in Ayodhya amid a political row over alleged irregularities in temple donations, triggering protests and sharp exchanges between the Congress and the BJP.

Rai alleged he had been placed under "house arrest" in Ayodhya and claimed he would not leave until allowed to offer prayers. He said several members of the delegation, including MPs Kishori Lal Sharma, Rakesh Rathor, Ujjwal Raman Singh and Tanuj Punia, were either stopped en route, detained or confined to their residences. Police have not issued an official statement confirming the actions.

Up Cong Chief Ajay Rai said that he will not leave Ayodhya until he is allowed to offer prayers at the Ram Temple —PTI

Around two dozen Congress workers were detained during a sit-in outside Acharya Narendra Dev University in Kumarganj, where Rai was kept under police watch. Rai said he was shifted from a hotel to a government guest house at midnight, questioning whether it amounted to detention. His wife also expressed concern over his whereabouts and safety.

Congress leaders alleged that police restrictions prevented them from visiting the temple, while accusing the government of targeting protesters. The party said the delegation intended to seek blessings at the Ram temple but was stopped amid heightened tensions over the alleged embezzlement of donations.

The Congress has demanded a Supreme Court-monitored probe and dissolution of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh also attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging his "silence" on the alleged donation irregularities was a "direct assault on the faith" of crores of people.

- "The Modi government constituted the (Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra) Trust without any transparent criteria or public consultation and appointed RSS members to it. Subsequently, the entire trust was exempted from the ambit of the RTI Act. Modi ji, break your silence," Ramesh said.

Reacting sharply, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath accused the Congress and Samajwadi Party of hypocrisy, saying those who once opposed the Ram temple movement were now invoking Lord Ram.

Speaking in Rampur after launching development projects worth over Rs 690 crore, he alleged that earlier governments had used force against Ram devotees and "questioned faith".

The controversy intensified after an SIT probe led to the arrest of eight individuals, though opposition parties alleged that only minor accused were being acted against while the main culprits remained free. —PTI

Cong leader's son held for hoardings featuring PM, Yogi

BARABANKI, 30 JUNE

Jayant Gautam, son of former Congress MP AP Gautam, was detained and later released over controversial hoardings displayed along a highway in Haidergarh, Uttar Pradesh. The hoardings depict Prime Minister Narendra Modi and CM Yogi Adityanath with tape over their mouths, raising issues like Ram temple donation, inflation, unemployment, and paper leaks. They also feature Gautam's photograph at the bottom. Haidergarh Sub-Divisional Magistrate Rajesh Vishwakarma called the hoardings inappropriate and said an FIR would be filed. Police questioned Gautam late at night, and his release followed intervention by Congress leaders. Officials are examining permission protocols and the purpose of the display. —PTI

Anti-conversion law will not affect innocent: Fadnavis

MUMBAI, 30 JUNE

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis stated that the newly passed anti-conversion bill will provide a dedicated legal framework, as existing provisions were deemed inadequate. He said, "The law will effectively address cases of forced religious conversion," noting that central approval is awaited. The bill aims to prevent conversions through coercion, fraud, or inducement, with penalties including seven years' imprisonment and fines of Rs 1 lakh for unlawful conversions via marriage. Fadnavis assured that police will conduct fair investigations, emphasising that "no innocent person will be implicated." The law also requires prior notice for conversion, strengthening Maharashtra's stance against illegal religious conversions. —PTI

Sena MLAs sent Ahir to Council, we back him: Shinde

MUMBAI, 30 JUNE

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Tuesday hailed Sena (UBT) MLC Sachin Ahir as a grassroots worker with close links to Sena workers, saying his decision to align with the Mahayuti would strengthen the Shiv Sena.

Earlier in the day, Ahir, a close aide of Aaditya Thackeray, sprang a surprise by filing his nomination for the election to the Maharashtra council deputy chairperson post, supported by the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance.

"Shiv Sena legislators had elected Sachin Ahir to the council earlier, and the BJP is now backing him," Shinde told reporters.

He said Ahir filed his nomination for the deputy chairman's post with the support of the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance, and is expected to be elected comfortably.

Sachin Ahir (left) joins the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena in Mumbai on Tuesday —ANI

The election to the post of council ldeputy chairperson is scheduled for 1 July.

"When Ahir became an MLC, it was our legislators who voted for him. He was elected to the upper house by Shiv Sena MLAs who had won on the 'bow and arrow' symbol. He is still with us now," Shinde added.

As per the Vidhan Bhavan records, Ahir still had two years left in his six-year term as an MLC.

Responding to remarks by Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders Uddhav Thackeray and Aaditya Thackeray that it was 'Operation Devendra Fadnavis' rather than 'Operation Tiger,' Shinde claimed that in 2019, Fadnavis had made "50 calls" to Uddhav, but none were answered. —PTI

Karur declared vacant, 7 TN Assembly seats to see bypoll contest

CHENNAI, 30 JUNE

The Karur Assembly constituency in Tamil Nadu has been declared vacant after the resignation of former state minister MLA MR Vijayabaskar, taking the total number of vacant seats in the state to seven, an official said on Tuesday.

The state is set for by-polls in seven Assembly constituencies.

Vijayabaskar, who won from Karur defeating the TVK candidate VP Mathiyalagan in the 23 April Assembly election, quit on 29 June. He is likely to join the ruling TVK. He was among the 25 rebel AIADMK MLAs who voted for the TVK government during the floor test in the Assembly on 13 May.

He was the sixth legislator from the AIADMK to quit after the party's setback in the Assembly election. The party has been facing an exodus of its cadres after the polls.

Following his resignation, the total number of vacancies in the Assembly has risen to seven, six vacancies created by the resignations of AIADMK MLAs and Tiruchirappalli East constituency vacated by Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay following his victory from two seats. He has retained Perambur constituency in Chennai.

This brings the strength of the AIADMK in the Assembly to 41 from 47. — PTI

IAS officer Rahee moved after fight with UP BJP neta

JALAUN, 30 JUNE

Days after an altercation with a BJP leader, IAS officer Rinku Singh Rahee, the SDM of Jalaun, has been transferred.

District Magistrate Rajesh Kumar Pandey issued the transfer on Tuesday, posting Rahee as Judicial SDM at Orai and assigning the charge of Jalaun SDM to Rakesh Kumar Soni.

Rahee's transfer has come in the context of a controversy over an altercation on 23 June between Rahee and BJP Block Pramukh Ram Niranjan during the inspection of a cold storage.

Niranjan had alleged that Rahee slapped him. Revenue employees of Jalaun tehsil submitted a representation to the DM on Monday, alleging "rude behaviour" by the officer.

Rahee, a 2022-batch IAS officer who had resigned earlier this year, joined as SDM of Jalaun tehsil 45 days ago.

In 2009, Rahee exposed a Rs 80 crore pension scam. Leading to gangsters attacking him in March 2009. He survived the assassination attempt but suffered jaw and vision.

In July 2025, while serving as the SDM in Shahjahanpur, a controversy erupted after a video went viral showing Rahee doing sit-ups to take responsibility for poor sanitation conditions after a dispute with lawyers. — PTI

HC refuses Didi's urgent hearing on TMC bank freeze

KOLKATA, 30 JUNE

The Calcutta High Court on Tuesday refused an urgent hearing to a petition by the Mamata-led Trinamool Congress over the freezing of its bank accounts.

Authorities placed a debit freeze on three TMC bank accounts, after complaints by rebel MLAs seeking a probe into the source of funds.

Refusing to give precedence in hearing of the petition by the Mamata-led faction of the TMC, Justice Saugata Bhattacharyya said the matter will come up for hearing according to the listing serial.

The Mamata-led faction's lawyer Kishore Dutta informed the court that three bank accounts of the party have been placed under debit freeze, blocking all outward transactions from these accounts, and sought an urgent hearing in the matter.

The debit operations of three bank accounts of the Trinamool Congress holding around Rs 440 crore have been frozen.

The freeze follows complaints by some MLAs aligned with rebel leader Ritabrata Banerjee to the cybercrime police station, seeking a detailed investigation into the accounts.

In their complaints, the legislators questioned the source of funds deposited in the accounts and sought an investigation into the transactions. — PTI

WB COPS SERVE NOTICE TO HUMAYUN

KOLKATA, 30 JUNE

West Bengal Police on Tuesday issued notices to AJUP Chief Humayun Kabir, for alleged provocative public remarks.

The notices were served within 24 hours of CM Suvendu Adhikari slamming the Nowda MLA in the assembly, stating that the time has come to "teach him (Kabir) a lesson".

Kabir is directed to appear at the Shaktipur Police Station in Murshidabad district on 3 July and before the Rejinagar PS on 4 July in connection with cases registered against him.

Police visited Kabir's Murshidabad residence on Tuesday to serve the summons, which were received by a family member, officers said. — PTI

—WIKIPEDIA

Mehbooba accuses J&K govt of arrests to suppress protest

SRINAGAR, 30 JUNE

PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti claimed that party workers and leaders were placed under house arrest to prevent protests over "backdoor" appointments by the government. She criticised the NC government, accusing them of hiding behind the police to avoid accountability and crushing peaceful dissent, including protests against outsourcing government jobs. She said, "Their hypocrisy is fully exposed as PDP members are detained to stop protests, while departments like Housing and Revenue use police to demolish poor families' homes in the name of anti-encroachment drives." On Sunday, police halted a PDP protest march at the Press Enclave, preventing activists from demonstrating against alleged illegal recruitment. —PTI

Camp relocation turns Manipur rally violent

IMPHAL, 30 JUNE

Protesters clashed with security forces in Manipur's Imphal East district during a demonstration against the relocation of a UNLF(P) camp, officials confirmed.

Residents of Uyumpok and nearby areas staged a road blockade, opposing the decision to move the camp from Nongshum.

Protesters argued that the camp served as a security buffer for the valley villages bordering the hill areas. Security forces responded by firing tear gas shells to disperse the crowd.

Protesters argued the camp served as a security buffer for villages in the valley prompting security forces to use tear gas on the crown —SCREENGRAB

The camp, established following the 2023 ethnic violence, is situated approximately 2.5km from Uyumpok, where the protest occurred.

"We have been living peacefully and without fear of attacks by militants from the hills since the camp was established. If it is shifted, who will ensure our safety? Its presence has prevented armed militants from entering this side of the valley," said protester Mangaleima Devi.

The UNLF(P) signed a peace agreement with the Centre in November 2023, becoming the first valley-based insurgent group to do so. Despite the truce, several cadres have been arrested for alleged unlawful activities, including extortion and illegal arms possession. —PTI

Shah launches revised FCRA portal, e-OCI

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Union Home Minister Amit Shah unveiled a new online portal for regulating foreign contributions and the e-OCI Card, aimed at simplifying compliance and enhancing security through technology. Shah highlighted that before 2014, the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) system was bogged down in paperwork. He said the renewed FCRA portal will improve ease of operations for organisations and strengthen monitoring of foreign funding with wrong intentions. The FCRA 2.0 Portal digitises registration, renewal, and returns, integrating with databases like PAN and Aadhaar. Shah also launched the digital e-OCI Card, benefiting over 50 lakh OCI holders by reducing paperwork through enabling real-time verification. He noted that applicants can now complete the entire OCI process online. —PTI

DAY 3 OF HUNGER STRIKE

CJP protest: Wangchuk's health worsens

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The Cockroach Janata Party's (CJP) protest at Jantar Mantar entered its 11th day on Tuesday, with activist Sonam Wangchuk's blood sugar dropping on the third day of his hunger strike, prompting fresh concerns over his health.

Organisers said Wangchuk's blood pressure was 117/60, oxygen saturation 96%, pulse rate 92 and blood sugar 66, below the normal range. Doctors attending to him said fasting in the prevailing heat was particularly challenging.

CJP spokesperson Ashutosh Ranka urged the government to take Wangchuk's condition seriously, warning that Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan would be responsible if his health deteriorated.

Addressing supporters, CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke criticised BJP leaders for their remarks against protesters, responding to comparisons with a "virus" by saying the movement was "the vaccine". He linked the protest to alleged examination irregularities, including the Rajasthan Paramedical Council paper leak, and urged students and parents to support the campaign, arguing the issue extended beyond the NEET controversy.

Activist Sonam Wangchuk and Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke, CJP spokesperson Saurav Das. —PTI

Dipke also alleged that police restrictions had prevented some supporters, farmer leaders and student activists from reaching the venue, while questioning the need for identity cards to enter Jantar Mantar. He claimed greater action should have been taken against those responsible for paper leaks rather than protesters.

Targeting the Centre, Dipke accused the government of ignoring students' concerns and demanded Pradhan's resignation, holding him responsible for student suicides.

He also said the agitation, which began on June 20 over alleged examination irregularities, would expand to include broader accountability issues, including the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. —PTI

OP SINDOOR

Cong moves breach of privilege motion against Rajnath 'lying' in Parl

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Congress leader KC Venugopal has written to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla for privilege proceedings against Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

Venugopal is accusing him of misleading Parliament regarding soldier casualties during Operation Sindoor.

Venugopal stated that on 28 July, 2025, Singh claimed no Indian soldiers were harmed during the Pahalgam terror attack and subsequent operation.

However, a later statement revealed six armed forces personnel had died during the operation.

Venugopal argued Singh's statement was misleading and a breach of privilege under Rule 223 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

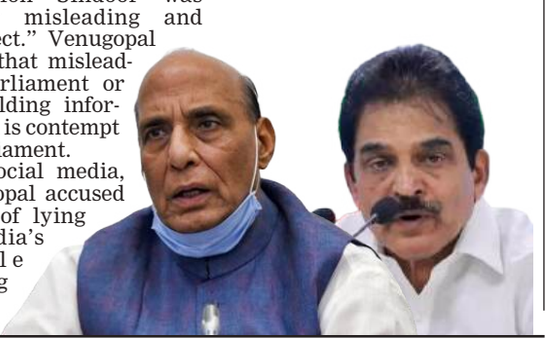
He said, "The minister of defence stating on the floor of the House that there had been no casualties during Operation Sindoor was clearly misleading and incorrect." Venugopal added that misleading Parliament or withholding information is contempt of Parliament.

On social media, Venugopal accused Singh of lying to India's people during the debate, claiming Singh's statement was a "straightforward, clear-cut lie."

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh claimed no Indian soldiers were harmed during the Pahalgam operation.However, it was later revealed 6 personnel had died.

The six fallen soldiers—five from the Army, one from Air Force—were recently honoured at the National War Memorial.

The defence ministry said the soldiers' sacrifice was acknowledged despite claims of social media misinformation. —PTI



Govt to launch App for farmers to check soil health

CHANDIGARH/ REWARI, 30 JUNE

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced that the government will shortly release a mobile app to help farmers assess soil health and promote balanced fertiliser use. Speaking at the closing of 'Khet Bachao Abhiyaan' in Haryana's Rewari district, Chouhan emphasised organic farming to reduce reliance on chemicals. He expressed concern over the indiscriminate use of fertilisers, stating, "You will stand in your field, and your mobile will tell you what nutrients are in your soil and how much fertiliser should be applied." Currently, 26 crore soil health cards have been issued nationwide. The minister urged farmers to avoid overusing urea and DAP, highlighting Haryana's role in India's agricultural success, including its contribution to the country's rice and wheat production. —*PTI*

— PTI

Court extends Khan Sir's protection again

PATNA, 30 JUNE

A Patna court has extended the protection from arrest for educator Faisal Khan, known as Khan Sir, in connection with a coaching institute firing incident until July 3. Khan was named in an FIR after his guards allegedly fired during vandalism at his institute in June. The court, which had previously granted protection on June 9, now extended it until the next hearing. Bail applications for Khan's security guards, currently in custody, will also be heard on 3 July. The court sought details of the arms licenses of the guards. Roshan Anand, Khan's rival, is an accused in the case and is out on bail. The case involves vandalism and stone-pelting outside Khan's coaching institute on 2 June. —*PTI*

Missing Keralam fishers rescued off Vizhinjam

T'PURAM, 30 JUNE

Three fishermen missing since venturing into the sea from Vizhinjam have been rescued. Sanu, 37, and Robinson, 55, from Vettukad, and Babu, 40, from Valiyaveli, set out on 28 June and failed to return by 29 June. A search involving the Fisheries Department, Marine Enforcement, Coast Guard, and local fishermen was launched after their disappearance. Authorities also alerted agencies in Tamil Nadu's Colachel, Kanyakumari, and Thengapattanam. The search extended late into the night, and early Tuesday, the fishermen were found and rescued. They are expected to arrive at the Vizhinjam harbour around 1.30pm. The rescue was successful after extensive efforts across multiple agencies.—*PTI*

Woman, daughter electrocuted while using hand pump

BALLIA, 30 JUNE

A woman and her daughter died after electric shock while drawing water from a hand pump in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia district. Beena Singh, 45, was using a motorised hand pump in Duhra Bihra village when it became live due to an electrical fault. Her daughter Kajal, 20, rushed to help but was also electrocuted. Suman, the younger daughter, raised an alarm, prompting locals to disconnect them. Both women were taken to a community health centre, where doctors declared them dead. The incident occurred Monday at Sikandarpur police station area. SHO Chandra Chaurasia confirmed the accident, which highlights rural electrical hazards. The family refused autopsy, police said. —*PTI*

Kharif sowing down 23 pc, only 26 pc water in dams

Poor farm output can lead to price rise, high inflation

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The sowing of kharif crops is lagging behind significantly in the country, with total acreage at 182.72 lakh hectares as of 25 June, down 23 per cent compared to 236.46 lakh hectares a year earlier, due to the delayed onset and sluggish progress of the southwest monsoon, says agriculture ministry data.

The live storage in 166 important reservoirs monitored by the CWC as on 25 June stood at 48.405 billion cubic metres (BCM), or 26.37 per cent of full reservoir level (FRL).

The area under pulses, oilseeds, coarse cereals and cotton has also shrunk compared to last year.

The sowing of kharif crops normally begins with the onset of southwest monsoon in June.

Paddy acreage, the main kharif crop, was down 25.17 per cent at 25.75 lakh hectares as on 25 June, against 34.41 lakh hectares last year.

Paddy acreage, the main kharif crop, was down 25.17 per cent at 25.75 lakh hectares as on 25 June, compared to 34.41 lakh hectares last year—*ANI*

The sowing of pulses declined by 30.47 per cent to 14.92 lakh hectares from 21.46 lakh hectares, while area under oilseeds plunged 53.33 per cent to 16.99 lakh hectares from 36.41 lakh hectares.

Among pulses, tur/arhar sowing stood at 3.56 lakh hectares against 8.45 lakh hectares.

In oilseeds, groundnut area fell to 8.87 lakh hectares from 15.29 lakh hectares, and soybean to 6.92 lakh hectares from 19.97 lakh hectares. Coarse cereals acreage declined to 31.84 lakh hectare from 36.07 lakh hectare.

Cotton sowing dropped 34.61 per cent to 29.66 lakh hectares from 45.36 lakh hectares.

However, sugarcane saw a marginal increase to 57.31 lakh hectares from 56.64 lakh hectares, while jute and mesta acreage also slightly increased to 6.25 lakh hectares from 6.13 lakh hectares.

The southwest monsoon, critical for kharif, has been 42 per cent below normal as of 24 June, with central India facing a 59 per cent deficit, East and Northeast India 41 per cent, South 28 per cent, and NW India 22 per cent, as per IMD data.

El Nino conditions exist over Pacific Ocean and are expected to strengthen. — PTI

BURNING NAPHTHA

Twelve fire trucks were deployed during firefighting operations, West Bengal police said —*PTI*

Fire erupts at WB petrochem unit; 1 dead, 20 injured

HALDIA, 30 JUNE

A 38-year-old womam died and around 20 people were injured when a fire broke out in a naphtha pipeline of the Haldia Petrochemicals Ltd (HPL) in West Bengal's Purba Medinipur district early on Tuesday, police said. The fire was detected around 2.45 am, they said, adding that it quickly spread, engulfing houses in the Chiranjibpur area in ward 13 of Haldia Municipality.

Twelve fire trucks were deployed, and the fire is still burning in a small part of the pipeline, police said.

"Around 20 people were injured in the fire. Of them, four are critical. Some are undergoing treatment here while some were referred to hospitals in Kolkata," a police officer said. Among the injured were two company security personnel, he said.

The injured were initially taken to the Haldia Sub-Divisional Hospital. Five of them were later shifted to Tamluk Medical College and Hospital, he said.

- The fire was detected around 2.45 am, they said. It spread fast, engulfing houses in the Chiranjibpur area in ward 13 of Haldia Municipality

"Around 10 people are being shifted to state-run SSKM Hospital and NRS Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, besides two other private hospitals in the city," he said.

Police said the fire has been brought under control. "The fire fighters are using foam and fly ash, and hopefully it will be doused soon," the officer said. The blaze also damaged overhead railway equipment disrupting train services, officials said.

HPL said preliminary information indicated that the incident might have occurred near a naphtha theft point near its plant.

Naphtha is highly combustible, and HPL has repeatedly cautioned locals against illegally accessing petroleum products. — *PTI*

Rape: SC issues notice after Asaram's plea

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The Supreme Court sought the response of the Rajasthan government on a plea filed by godman Asaram challenging an order of the high court, which had upheld his conviction and life sentence in the rape of a minor in 2013.

While refusing to suspend Asaram's sentence, Justices MM Sundresh and Sheel Nagu issued a notice to the Rajasthan government on Tuesday and sought its reply within two weeks.

The SC directed the jail authorities to extend medical facilities to Asaram, and said it will consider granting bail only if there is any grave health problem.

During the hearing, senior advocate DS Naidu, appearing for the petitioner, submitted that Asaram is aged over 80 years and suffering from various ailments.

The Rajasthan HC had on 27 May upheld Asaram's conviction but acquitted him of charges of gangrape and penetrative sexual assault on a child.However, the HC upheld his conviction under IPC Section 376(2)(F), pertaining to the rape of a minor, thereby retaining the life imprisonment awarded by the trial court. The bench also upheld his conviction under Section 376 of the IPC and POCSO.

The HC had acquitted co-accused Sanchita Gupta alias Shilpi and Sharat Chandra.

Asaram was convicted on 25 April 2018 for sexually assaulting a minor at his ashram and was sentenced to life imprisonment. — *PTI*

NO CBI PROBE INTO BIHAR ENCOUNTER: SC

The Supreme Court refused to entertain a plea seeking constitution of an independent expert committee to inquire into the alleged "extra-judicial killing" of activist Bharat Bhushan Tiwari in a police encounter in Bihar. Justices MM Sundresh and Sheel Nagu asked the petitioner to approach the Patna High Court. Advocate Vishal Tiwari, who filed the plea, said the PIL was filed in public interest. The bench then said, "No sorry. You can approach the HC." The plea had also sought a probe by the CBI, claiming the case warrants a prompt independent investigation. —*PTI*

Pay wife even if parents support her, orders HC

PRAYAGRAJ, 30 JUNE

The Allahabad High Court ruled that parental support for a distressed wife does not absolve her husband of his duty to pay maintenance.

The court allowed a criminal revision petition filed by the wife and her two minor children against an order of the Bulandshahr family court.

The family court, by its order passed in December 2023, had rejected the wife's claim for maintenance entirely while awarding Rs 3,000 per month as maintenance to each child.

Allowing the criminal revision petition filed by the wife and her two children, Justice Garima Prashad observed that a wife cannot be denied maintenance from her husband under section 125 of CrPC merely because her parents support her financially.

The court emphasised that the income of the wife's parents should not be considered her income, and parental assistance cannot replace the legal obligation of the husband to support his wife.

The wife had initially filed an application under Section 125 CrPC seeking maintenance from her husband, alleging that after marriage, she was subjected to harassment, taunts and cruelty by him and his family.

It was alleged that her husband, the second opposite party in the petition, is a retired army soldier who had married another woman.

The HC directed the husband to pay a monthly maintenance of Rs 5,000 to the wife. It also enhanced the maintenance amount for the two minor children to Rs 4,000 each. — *PTI*

Boby Chemmanur apologises to Honey over sexual remarks

KOCHI, 30 JUNE

Prominent businessman Boby Chemmanur has issued a public apology to Malayalam actress Honey Rose, stating he never intended to hurt her and expressing hope she will withdraw her criminal case. In a Facebook post, Chemmanur claimed he had always treated people with respect and had not harmed anyone.

He added that he often shared humour online but never to offend. "But I have come to realise that my statements about Ms Honey Rose have caused distress to her and her family. I apologise for the harm I have caused. I take responsibility for my words and their impact," he said.

Boby expressed the hope that his "sincere apology" would lead to the case being withdrawn, and he wanted the matter to be considered resolved. Honey has not responded.

The controversy arose after she accused Boby of making sexually coloured remarks during a showroom opening.

Rose condemned the incident, stating no one has the right to insult women. Chemmanur said he never intended to insult her. —*PTI*

Woman dies after self-immolation bid in Bijnor over rape

BIJNOR, 30 JUNE

A 20-year-old woman, who attempted self-immolation at the Bijnor police station after demanding action against a man she accused of refusing to marry her after an alleged sexual encounter, died in hospital.

The incident occurred around 11 pm on 21 June at Bijnor Kotwali. She was rushed to hospital, but she died Monday. The woman had filed a case in 2024 against Saurabh Singh rape. She lodged another complaint in 2025, alleging that Singh had a relationship with her and later refused to marry her. —*PTI*

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, or SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support

Ex-ISRO scientist Annadurai to head TN syllabus panel

CHENNAI, 30 JUNE

The Tamil Nadu government has formed a new expert panel led by former ISRO scientist Mayilsamy Annadurai to overhaul the state board school education syllabus.

The initiative aims to improve the quality of education for school students in the state to international standards and modernise the syllabus to align with contemporary global advancements, a recent government order said.

Accordingly, the committee has been tasked with redesigning the existing curriculum to ensure students are well-equipped to meet evolving modern challenges and technological changes. The tenure of the 17-member committee headed by Annadurai, comprising educationists and academicians, will be three years from the date of issue of the government order.

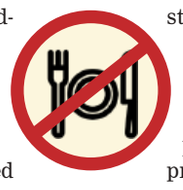
The government has also given permission to the State Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT) to constitute other sub-committees for syllabus development, textbook enhancement and other academic activities. —*PTI*

FDA finds rats, cockroaches, dirt in 6 Mumbai eateries

MUMBAI, 30 JUNE

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has suspended licences of six restaurants and eateries across Mumbai, citing unhygienic kitchens, expired stock, and misbranded products found during raids. The action targeted Flint & Waarsa in Nariman Point, along with five other establishments in Borivali, Santacruz, Andheri, Bandra, and Bhandup.

On 27 June, officials inspected Flint & Waarsa, finding misbranded items, collecting five samples for lab testing, and seizing stock worth Rs 11,350. They also disposed of Rs 16,201 worth of expired stock.



During raids across the city, officials discovered cockroaches, rats, and unhygienic storage, with establishments lacking proper documents and staff not having undergone health checks.

The Maharashtra FDA stated licences were suspended due to poor cleanliness, inadequate refrigeration, and failure to address customer grievances. —*PTI*

THREE COPS SUSPENDED

Man killed for opposing eve teasing

JAMSHEDPUR, 30 JUNE

A man critically injured in a stabbing while protesting against eve-teasing at a bar in Jharkhand's Jamshedpur died during treatment, sparking widespread protests. Three police officers have been suspended over alleged negligence. The victim, Himanshu Singh, was among two men protesting at a bar in Bistupur police station area on Saturday night, leading to a confrontation.

Police responded after being informed, but the accused reportedly dragged the two men from a police patrol vehicle and stabbed them. Himanshu died on Monday evening, while the other victim remains in critical condition at Tata Main Hospital. An FIR was lodged against ten individuals, including the bar owner.

Family members, relatives and the public protest after the killing of Himanshu Singh in Jamshedpur on Monday—*PTI*

A probe by the deputy superintendent of police, supported by CCTV footage, revealed lapses by the patrol team, leading to suspension of Assistant Sub-Inspectors Ratan Kumar Das and Rajesh Kumar Ranjan, and constable Manoj Kumar.

The news of Himanshu's death resulted in massive protests, with hundreds blocking traffic for over six hours. Protesters accused police of inaction and demanded immediate arrests of all involved. They also burnt tyres and damaged a police vehicle.

Jamshedpur West MLA Saryu Roy blamed the police for the attack, calling it a collapse of law and order. —*PTI*

31 BOOKED IN RS 100 CR LAND SCAM IN UP'S SAMBHAL

SAMBHAL, 30 JUNE

An FIR has been registered against 31 named persons and some unidentified individuals in connection with an alleged fraud involving around Rs 100 crore worth of village community land in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal district, police said on Tuesday.

The case pertains to the alleged fraudulent allotment, mutation and illegal occupation of about 2.367 hectares of gram sabha land in Takhtgushain village, situated along the Sambhal-Moradabad road. The current market value of the land is estimated at around Rs 100 crore.

The FIR was lodged at Sambhal Kotwali police station by revenue official Sparsh Gupta on the directions of District Magistrate Ankit Khandelwal, they said.

Sambhal Superintendent of Police Krishna Kumar Bishnoi said the accused allegedly secured mutation of the land in 2008 on the basis of forged lease documents purportedly dating back to 1967 and took possession of the property.

He said the action followed an administrative inquiry that revealed several serious irregularities in the matter. —*PTI*

Drop gas prices now: Trump threatens firms

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

US President Donald Trump urged petrol retailers to lower fuel prices immediately, warning of "big problems" if they do not. He highlighted that despite crude oil dropping to $68 a barrel, retail prices remain unjustifiably high. Posting on Truth Social, Trump said, "Gasoline Retailers must get their Prices down, IMMEDIATELY!" He warned federal oversight would increase to prevent unfair pricing practices, especially regional taxes. "There will be no gouging, which is totally illegal," he declared, criticising Californian taxes. Trump also disclosed directing the Department of Justice to investigate energy firms for "gouging" consumers. The US market's volatility earlier this year was driven by military strikes on Iran, but diplomatic talks are now easing tensions, gradually lowering fuel prices. *—PTI*

Sri Lanka cuts fuel prices after easing supply restrictions

COLOMBO, 30 JUNE

Sri Lanka has reduced retail prices of diesel and petrol for the first time since recent spikes caused by Middle Eastern conflicts, the state fuel entity announced. Following the US-Iran ceasefire and reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, diesel prices fell by LKR 25 to LKR 382 per litre, and 92 octane petrol by LKR 20 to LKR 414 per litre, effective midnight. This is the sixth revision since the US-Iran stand-off, with prices now decreasing. The rupee's seven per cent depreciation since January contributed to high fuel costs amid regional tensions. The fragile ceasefire remains threatened by recent Gulf exchanges of fire, adding to regional instability concerns. *—PTI*

Blast in Monaco injures Ukrainian tycoon, family

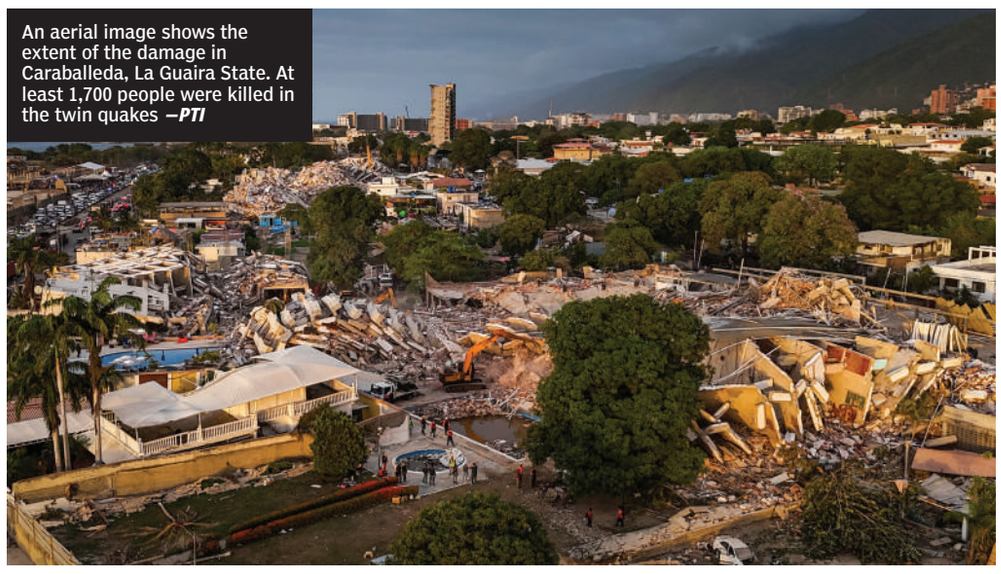
PARIS, 30 JUNE

An explosion from an improvised device injured three people, including two children, at a residential building in Monaco, with the attacker fleeing to France, authorities confirmed. French and Ukrainian media identified the injured as Ukrainian billionaire Vadym Yermolayev and his family. The attack on Monday night shocked Monaco's elite community. Monaco Prince Albert II condemned it as "an odious act" and stated that all services were mobilised to ensure security. The suspect crossed into France on foot, identified via surveillance footage in Monaco and Beausoleil. French police are supporting the investigation, but details remain limited. Ukrainska Pravda reported Vadym Iermolaiev was targeted, citing sanctions from 2023 linked to Russia. *—PTI*

S Africa tense amid anti-migration protests

JOHANNESBURG, 30 JUNE

The South African government has beefed up its security personnel across the country as thousands of demonstrators gathered to rally against alleged illegal immigrants on Tuesday. Groups have set 30 June as the deadline for millions of immigrants to leave the country. Authorities fear that the protests, called for by groups such as March and March, could lead to mass-scale looting and mob violence, similar to the 2008 anti-migrant riots that left 62 people dead. Groups carried posters with slogans including "SA withdraw from the UN refugee convention," and "80 per cent of children born in Limpopo province are born to foreign nationals." There are about 3 million documented foreign nationals in South Africa. *—PTI*



An aerial image shows the extent of the damage in Caraballeda, La Guaira State. At least 1,700 people were killed in the twin quakes *—PTI*

Venezuelans search for loved ones amid aid crisis

Families wait in hope as toll hits 1,700, but question government's response

LA GUAIRA, 30 JUNE

Venezuelans continued searching collapsed buildings on Monday, five days after twin earthquakes killed more than 1,700 people, as concerns mounted over a prolonged humanitarian crisis.

Relief organisations say the first 72 hours after a natural disaster is the most crucial time period for rescues, though survival can be extended if people have access to food and water. Five days after the twin quakes, questions loomed about whether the cash-strapped government which will be able to coordinate the effort needed to care for thousands of people who have been left homeless, as a 4.6-magnitude aftershock struck La Guaira.

The government is highlighting its efforts as residents question its slow response.

Jorge Rodríguez, the leader of the Venezuelan National Assembly and brother of acting President Delcy Rodríguez, said that the government restored electricity to 90 per cent of La Guaira, established 15 temporary camps and assessed unsafe buildings.

Residents search through the rubble of a building that collapsed in the earthquakes in La Guaira, Venezuela, on Tuesday *—PTI*

Delcy, meanwhile, shared footage of a man rescued after 43 hours, saying, "Each life saved is a victory for hope."

Families, however, continued waiting anxiously. "Until I see the body, I still have hope," said Ana Rada.

The US has deployed 300 first responders, military aircraft carrying supplies and over USD 300 million in aid, while assisting repairs at La Guaira port and Caracas airport. However, the Trump administration is unlikely to extend humanitarian protections to Venezuelans in the US.

Among rescuers was deported miner Jean Sosa, who said he had rescued 20 people using only a pickaxe. "Many people could have been saved if there had been equipment," he said.

DAMAGE GREATER THAN REPORTED

Jorge said 855 buildings and 15,866 people were affected, while NASA estimated nearly 58,900 damaged structures. But the UN said up to 6.8 million people could be affected, and more than 50,000 people have been reported missing on online databases, raising questions about the government's estimations. *—PTI*

Oman backs Hormuz fees; Iran, US teams head to Doha

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf during a recent meeting with Omani Foreign Minister Badr Al Busaidi *—PRESS TV*

MUSCAT, 30 JUNE

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said on Tuesday that a technical team was en route to Doha to hash out details on US-Iran deal. Both Qatar and Tehran stated that there would be no direct meeting with US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner and Iran's team. Iranian officials said that they are looking to discuss unfreezing the $6 billion in frozen assets held in Qatar.

This comes as Oman's Foreign Minister Badr al-Busaidi expressed support for Iran's plan to impose "maritime service fees" on vessels crossing the Strait of Hormuz, according to Iranian state-run Press TV. He said that Oman opposes any tolls on transit passage itself, but there was a clear distinction in international maritime law between transit tolls and legitimate maritime, environmental, and navigational service fees, which can be discussed voluntarily with benefiting states and companies.

- Oman said it opposes any 'toll system' but argues there is nothing in international law against a 'fee' system, which countries and firms can take up voluntarily

This is likely to further complicate the 14-point peace deal, with both Iran and the US consistently defending contradictory interpretations of the deal. US President Donald Trump insists that the deal says there can be no toll charged, and had previously threatened to "blow up" Oman if it was party to Iran's proposed system. *—Salar News*

Israeli troops push into Syria to extend 'buffer zone'

ABDIN, 30 JUNE

Israeli troops fired warnings shots at walls and between the angry Syrian protesters as they entered the Syrian town of Abdin even as residents tried to block the roads. No one was injured on Monday, but most residents fled, raising fears that Israel's incursion will only go deeper.

"They come into the village every few days," said resident Mohammad al-Hassan, standing near children looking at an exploded shell. "They come in armored 4x4 vehicles, they roam around the village and search some houses, they knock on doors and if people don't answer the door they break it down and enter the houses."

Israel seized control of a UN-patrolled buffer zone in southern Syria in December 2024, following the ouster of Bashar Assad. Israel argues that it the buffer zone needs to be expanded. Syria's interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa called on Israel to withdraw from the area that the UN says is 235 sq kms, even though there have been no big attacks from Syria since Assad's ouster. *—PTI*

BIBI TO RAISE ERDOGAN'S 'ANTI-ISRAEL' STATEMENTS WITH US

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that his government will raise Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's recent statements about Israel with Washington. During a Cabinet meeting on Sunday, Netanyahu said "hardly a day goes by without Erdogan calling for the destruction of the Israel" and that his government is taking such remarks "very seriously". Erdogan has been increasingly critical of Israel, over its wars in Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, and Iran, alleging that Turkey is next. This also comes after Israel recognised the Armenian Genocide, setting of alarm bells in Ankara.

ISRAELI STRIKES KILL 8 IN GAZA, INCLUDING 2 CHILDREN

Israeli strikes in southern and central Gaza on Monday killed at least eight people, including two children, and wounded at least 20 others, according to health officials and emergency services. Israel targeted tent camps housing displaced Palestinians. Meanwhile, Israel security forces shot dead a Palestinian teen during a raid at the West Bank.

At least 1,045 Palestinianshave been killed since the October ceasefire, with Israeli soldiers siezing nearly 60% of Gaza *—PTI*

Digital sovereignty being weaponised: US official

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

The concept of digital and artificial intelligence sovereignty is in the danger of being weaponised by different political voices overseas, said US Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Jacob Helberg at the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) Leadership Summit.

"Sovereignty comes from being a net contributor to the world's innovation ecosystem. It is about innovation sovereignty, not just 'do you control last year's stack entirely in-house'," Helberg said. "The danger is that that concept is being weaponised by a number of different political voices overseas to be interpreted in a way that it really means we are going to rebuild in-house the entire stack top to bottom in order to be sovereign."

He said the idea that a country is not sovereign if it did not control its full artificial intelligence stack was "incredibly backward" and economically dangerous. "Because what that means is these countries are going to sink billions of dollars in resources to reinvent something that already exists". *—PTI*

Don threatens 10 yr jail term for defacing Reflecting Pool

After blaming the "Radical Left scum" for an algae outbreak in the Reflecting Pool that he spent $16 million refurbishing, Trump said that the landmark was open ahead of the 4 July celebrations. He added that "vandals" could face up to 10 years in prison if caught defacing any of the 70 landmarks in Washington, DC. The pool had been closed for two days over the algae outbreak.

STARMER ANNOUNCES £15B EXTRA FOR DEFENCE & DRONES

LONDON, 30 JUNE

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Tuesday unveiled a new defence investment proposal (DIP) and allocated £15 billion extra on military, including for self-flying fighter jets, uncrewed submarines and drones. Starmer said that any Labour MP would approve of the budget, but did not comment on whether his likely successor Andy Burnham had signed off on it.

The DIP comes shortly after John Healey resigned as defence secretary because he alleged the government wasn't spending enough on military.

The government says the spending plan has been "refocused" in the past few weeks under Healey's successor, Defence Secretary Dan Jarvis. That includes a bit more money than the 13.5 billion pounds ($18 billion) Healey was offered, but far less than the 28 billion pounds ($37 billion) that defence officials called for.

Five billion pounds were allocated to drones, as the UK studies their prevalence in the Russia-Ukraine war. Starmer also said that the government is creating a £50 billion defence export facility.

Starmer said that he is on course to get defence spending up to 3 per cent of the GDP.

"We are raising it to 2.7 per cent, putting us on a trajectory to reach 3 per cent in the next parliament, which must be the number one priority at the next spending review," he said. This comes amid the US pressing NATO allies to beef up their defence spending. *—Agencies*

US SC upholds ban on transgenders from playing sports

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

The US Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld state laws banning transgender girls and women from competing on female school sports teams, ruling that such restrictions in Idaho and West Virginia do not violate the Constitution or the federal Title IX law against sex discrimination in education. The decision is expected to strengthen similar laws in more than two dozen Republican-led states.

The ruling does not affect separate lawsuits challenging policies in states such as Connecticut and California that allow transgender athletes to compete according to their gender identity.

The case involved West Virginia student Becky Pepper-Jackson and Idaho college student Lindsay Hecox, who challenged the bans. Pepper-Jackson, who has identified as female since childhood, recently won the state shot put title. Hecox did not qualify for Boise State's women's teams but competed in club sports.

The court's conservative majority has repeatedly ruled against transgender rights in recent years, including upholding bans on gender-affirming care for minors. Idaho argued the restrictions were needed for fair competition, while supporters of the athletes said individual circumstances should be considered.

The NCAA and US Olympic Committee have also barred transgender women from women's sports following an executive order by President Donald Trump. Polls indicate most Americans support requiring transgender athletes to compete based on their sex assigned at birth. *—PTI*

Right-wing Keiko declared winner of Peru Prez polls

LIMA, 30 JUNE

The Peruvian election commission announced on Monday that the Right-wing candidate Keiko Fujimori secured a narrow victory over Left-wing candidate Roberto Sanchez in the country's presidential runoff election, nearly 22 days after 7 June election.

Fujimori won 50.135 per cent of the vote, while Sanchez secured 49.865 per cent, a margin of fewer than 50,000 votes, one of the closest in Latin America in decades. However, Sanchez has rejected the results, alleging administrative irregularities in the handling of overseas votes without proof.

The results further the uptick of Right-wing candidates rising to power in Southern American countries.

Keiko is the daughter of former president Alberto Fujimori, who led Peru in the 1990s before he was jailed for corruption and crimes against humanity related to death squad killings and kidnappings carried out by the Grupo Colina death squad. *—Agencies*

'DESTRUCTIVE POLICIES'

US-India relationship at its lowest in 30 yrs: Khanna

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

The US-India relationship is at its lowest point in the last 30 years due to US President Donald Trump's "utterly destructive policies", Indian-origin Democrat leader Ro Khanna said on Monday.

"Trump's policies of getting into a war with Iran have been utterly destructive. It has been utterly destructive to the prices of gas in India. Talk to (External Affairs Minister S) Jaishankar if you don't believe me," Khanna said at the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum Leadership Summit in Washington.

"I was in China, and the Indian Ambassador there told me that a generation of trust has been lost by Trump. If we don't speak the truth about the damage this President has done...we are not living in reality," Khanna, a 2028 Presidential hopeful, said.

"Now you have an America that has forgotten that moral vision, that has a foreign policy of might makes right, threatening not just Iran, threatening Cuba, threatening to conquer Greenland, and we were having dinner as if everything is normal," Khanna said.

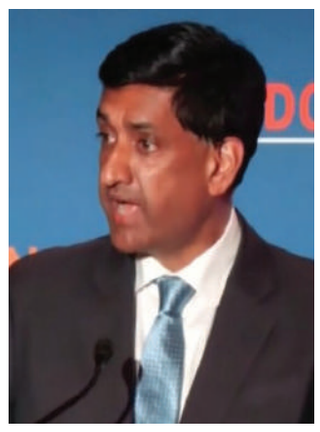
"Who cares about the partnerships of this and that when this President is literally destroying America's leadership in the entire world?" he added.

"The demagoguery about immigrants, the demagoguery of this President and talking about the lack of immigrants coming into the US. How can we sit here and not condemn his policies on what he has done with student visas, with the demonisation of talent coming to the US," Khanna said.

He also questioned Trump's boasting about the US leading in artificial intelligence, noting that 38 per cent of the top AI researchers are of Chinese origin and 72 per cent have foreign degrees.

Calling Trump a "lame duck", he added, "this is a President who doesn't understand that we need to be recruiting talent, not turning talent away".

He exuded confidence the Democrats were going to win the upcoming midterm elections and the 2028 Presidential polls. *—PTI*



OYO parent firm Prism files for Rs 6,650 cr IPO

SoftBank-owned SVF to remain largest shareholder in Prism

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Hospitality technology company Prism, the parent of OYO, has filed updated draft papers with markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 6,650 crore through an initial public offering (IPO), comprising entirely a fresh issue of shares.

The company has not included any offer-for-sale (OFS) component in the proposed public issue, meaning existing shareholders, will not dilute their holdings through the IPO.

FOUNDER, SOFTBANK TO RETAIN STAKES

The filing shows that SoftBank-owned SVF India Holdings remains the largest shareholder with a 40.04 per cent stake in Prism, the parent firm of OYO.

OYO Founder Ritesh Agarwal's aggregate shareholding, including his direct stake and holdings through RA Hospitality and Patient Capital, stands at 30.52 per cent.

Collectively, the promoters – Agarwal and SVF India Holdings – own 70.56 per cent of the company's pre-issue paid-up capital on a fully diluted basis.

The company plans to utilise Rs 4,987.5 crore from the net proceeds towards repayment or prepayment of borrowings, while the remaining funds will be used for general corporate purposes.

According to the Updated Draft Red Herring Prospectus (UDRHP) filed on Tuesday, Prism may also undertake a pre-IPO placement of up to Rs 1,330 crore before filing the Red Herring Prospectus. If completed, the amount raised through the fresh issue will be reduced accordingly.

HIGHEST REVENUE FROM ABROAD

The filing comes as the company reported a sharp improvement in its financial performance during the first nine months of FY26.

Prism, which started out as a budget hotel aggregator in India, now derives nearly 84 per cent of its revenue from global operations, the draft papers showed.

As per the UDRHP, for the nine months ended 31 December, 2025, Prism reported a global GBV of Rs 22,946.25 crore. The US was the largest contributor with Rs 12,022.51 crore, marking 52.39 per cent of total global bookings.

Europe contributed Rs 4,039.11 crore, or 17.60 per cent, India contributed Rs 2,731.71 crore, or 11.91 per cent, while Southeast Asia and other international markets accounted for the rest. *—PTI*

- Prism, the parent of OYO, has filed updated draft papers with markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 6,650 crore.

The investment reinforces India's growing role in global maritime trade infrastructure *—X/ADANI*

Adani sells 49% stake in Vizhinjam port to MSC for $1.4B

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) on Tuesday announced that Switzerland-based Medi terranean Shipping Company (MSC), the world's largest shipping and logistics group, will acquire a 49 per cent stake in its Vizhinjam port in Kerala for about USD 1.4 billion.

The acquisition will be made through MSC's terminal operating arm, Terminal Investment Limited (TiL), which will invest USD 1.397 billion, reflecting its share of the port's total enterprise value of USD 2.85 billion.

APSEZ described the transaction as the largest foreign private investment in Indian port infrastructure, saying it would reinforce Vizhinjam's position as a key transshipment hub in the Indian Ocean.

The companies have signed a definitive agreement covering TiL's investment in Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited, the port's concessionaire.

Commissioned in December 2024, Vizhinjam is India's first deep-draft mega transshipment port. It has a current capacity of 1.6 million TEUs, which is being expanded 3.5 times to 5.7 million TEUs by December 2028. Strategically located just 10 nautical miles from the East-West shipping route linking Europe, the Persian Gulf and the Far East, the port handled 1.3 million TEUs in FY26.

APSEZ said the partnership would improve cargo volumes, including Bangladesh traffic, strengthen its presence on East Africa trade routes and accelerate the port's growth.

The port features an 18-20 metre natural draft, a 2.9 km breakwater, an 800-metre berth, eight quay cranes and 24 automated yard cranes. APSEZ also operates ports in Australia, Colombo, Israel and Tanzania, while TiL manages more than 100 container terminals worldwide, handling over 70 million TEUs annually. *—PTI*

Fibe parent files for IPO to raise Rs 750 crore

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Social Worth Technologies Ltd, the parent company of digital lending platform Fibe, has filed draft papers with Sebi to raise funds through an initial public offering (IPO). The proposed IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares worth up to Rs 750 crore and an Offer-for-Sale (OFS) of over 4 crore equity shares by existing shareholders. The proceeds from the fresh issue will be used to invest in its material subsidiary, Enterprise Software Solutions Private Limited (ESPL), to strengthen its capital base and support lending requirements, among other general corporate purposes. The company, incorporated in 2015, operates under the Fibe brand and offers digital credit products across personal loans and purpose-driven financing, catering to consumption, education, insurance, and healthcare needs. *—PTI*

—ANI

Centre extends CBDT Chairman's term by six months

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The Union government has extended the tenure of Ravi Agrawal, Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), by six months until December 2026. The 1988-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer was set to retire on 30 June. An order from the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) stated that Agrawal's reappointment as CBDT Chairman is on a contract basis for six months from 1 July, 2026, or until further orders, under relaxed recruitment rules. Agrawal was initially appointed for one year in June 2024, extended by another year in June 2025. The CBDT, led by a Chairman and six members, formulates policies for the Income Tax Department. *—PTI*

UTI Mutual Fund buys 15L MCX shares for Rs 425 cr

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

UTI Mutual Fund has purchased nearly 15 lakh shares of commodity derivatives exchange MCX for Rs 425 crore via an open market bulk deal on the NSE. The purchase comprised 14,65,941 shares, equating to a 0.57 per cent stake in MCX, at an average price of Rs 2,899.23 each. The transaction was executed on Monday, with the seller's details not disclosed. MCX's shares fell nearly 2 per cent to Rs 2,868.90 on the NSE. In FY26, MCX reported a profit of Rs 530 crore, quadrupling from the previous year, and tripled revenue to Rs 889 crore in Q4. MCX, established in 2003, holds over 98 per cent market share in commodity futures trading. *—PTI*

Gold declines Rs 800; silver rebounds Rs 6,000

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Gold prices eased by Rs 800 to Rs 1.45 lakh per 10 grams on Tuesday amid subdued demand in the domestic market. The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity declined Rs 800 to Rs 1,45,800 per 10 grams from Monday's closing level of Rs 1,46,600 per 10 grams. Silver, however, staged a sharp rebound, snapping a four-session losing streak, rising by Rs 6,000 to Rs 2,30,000 per kilogram. The white metal had settled at Rs 2,24,000 per kg in the preceding session. Analysts said gold remained under pressure in the domestic market, while silver attracted value buying after the recent correction. In the international markets, spot gold traded marginally higher at USD 4,021.15 per ounce, while silver rose nearly 1 per cent at USD 58.81 per cent *—PTI*

Last 1% negotiations left in India-US trade deal: Gor

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

The US-India trade deal is in its "final steps", with only the last "one per cent" of negotiations left, US Ambassador to India **Sergio Gor** said on Tuesday, nearly 18 months after negotiations first began.

Addressing the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum Leadership Summit, Gor said he was determined to agree as it would be beneficial to both nations, and it would be sealed.

"We are in the final steps on this deal. Most of this deal is complete. There's a few items that remain on both sides. It's in the last 1 per cent of that deal," Gor said.

Responding to discussions on the length of the talks, he said: "People ask, why is this taking so long? We've been at this for a year and a half. To put it into perspective, we've been trading for 20 years

He added that the agreement would provide greater certainty for businesses engaged in bilateral trade.

KWATRA ON ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

Meanwhile India's Ambassador to the US **Vinay Mohan Kwatra** said emerging technologies would define the next phase of India-US cooperation, listing out biotechnology, AI and semiconductors as priority sectors.

Addressing the summit, Kwatra said India, currently a USD 4.3 trillion economy, was on course to become a USD seven trillion economy by the end of the decade, and that India's economic transformation has placed it at the centre of the evolving global order, making it a trusted growth engine and strategic partner for both advanced and emerging economies.

Referring to the government's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, he said it is not an inward-looking policy but one aimed at creating globally competitive manufacturing and resilient supply chains. *—PTI*

AI can decode brain activity without surgery: Meta

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Meta has unveiled Brain2Qwerty v2, an AI system that decodes brain activity into text without surgical implants.

The company describes it as the highest-performing end-to-end pipeline for real-time sentence decoding from non-invasive brain recordings to help with brain lesions or language impairment.

Meta trained the AI on around 22,000 sentences from nine volunteers, whom spent about 10 hours wearing a magnetoencephalography device while typing.

The system achieved a word accuracy rate of 61 per cent, a substantial improvement over the 8 per cent recorded by other non-invasive methods. For the best-performing participant, accuracy reached 78 per cent.

The initiative is part of its Digital Brain Project, under which it announced a USD 5 million fund. *—ANI*

IT shares drag mkts for 2nd day in a row

MUMBAI, 30 JUNE

Sensex and Nifty declined on Tuesday due to selling in IT, oil & gas and select banking shares amid uncertainty over the next round of US-Iran negotiations in Doha.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 249.70 points, or 0.33 per cent, to settle at 76,478.67, paring its opening gains. During the day, it fell by 398.98 points, or 0.51 per cent, to a low of 76,329.39.

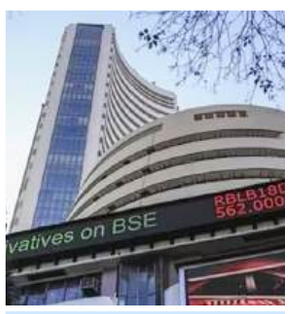
The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 80.50 points, or 0.34 per cent, to end at 23,865.75.

Among Sensex shares, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra, ITC and Hindustan Unilever were the major laggards. Maruti, Titan, Bajaj Finance and Eternal were among the gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,350.10 crore on Monday. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose by 0.23 per cent to USD 73.32 per barrel.

Sectoral performance tilted to the downside, with IT emerging as the primary drag, he said. Sectorally, BSE Focused IT tanked 2.62 per cent, followed by IT.

On Monday, the Sensex declined 372.10 points, or 0.48 per cent, to settle at 76,728.37. The Nifty dropped 109.75 points, or 0.46 per cent, to 23,946.25. *—PTI*



Crude futures slip to Rs 6,686 per barrel

Crude oil futures fell nearly 1 per cent on Tuesday, tracking weakness amid expectations of adequate supplies. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude oil contracts for July delivery declined by Rs 42, or 0.62 per cent, to Rs 6,686 per barrel in 18,339 lots. The August contract also fell by Rs 38, or 0.57 per cent, to Rs 6,685 per barrel in 2,391 lots. Globally, Brent crude for September delivery fell nearly 1 per cent to USD 73.40 a barrel, while WTI crude for August delivery slipped nearly 1 per cent to USD 70.21. *—PTI*

Govt allots ₹1.25 lakh cr for chip-making mission

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The Finance Ministry's expenditure department has approved a Budget proposal allocating Rs 1.25 lakh crore for India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0, aiming to bolster India's global chip-making ambitions and establish it as a key semiconductor destination. This outlay exceeds the Rs 76,000 crore allocated for ISM 1.0. The Expenditure Finance Committee has approved the Rs 1.25 lakh crore funding, which will be presented before the Cabinet.

Launched in the Union Budget 2026-27, ISM 2.0's broad objective is to promote a comprehensive chip manufacturing ecosystem, including equipment, materials, indigenous designs, and related components. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw emphasised that the initiative will prioritise indigenous chip

design, productisation, ecosystem partnership, and talent development.

Twelve manufacturing projects with a Rs 1.64 lakh crore investment pipeline have been approved, including one fabrication unit, two compound semiconductor units, and nine packaging units.

In design, 24 projects are supported, with 105 companies aided with advanced tools and 23 tapeouts completed, reflecting India's growing semiconductor design depth. A senior official described these advances as India's "long-time dream," with more projects expected to come soon. *—PTI*

India expands UPI services to Greece

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

India has launched UPI in Greece, a milestone in the country's digital payment ecosystem, said Union Minister Piyush Goyal.

With UPI now operational in Greece, eligible users can transfer money instantly, securely, and seamlessly, with costs significantly reduced,- Goyal said.

The minister, on an official visit to Athens, stated, "Delighted to witness the live demonstration of the Eurobank-NIPL partnership enabling UPI services at Eurobank headquarters in Athens, marking another important milestone in India's digital payment expansion."

UPI is now accepted in ten countries, including Greece, Singapore, the UAE, France, Mauritius, Nepal, Bhutan, Qatar, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia, enabling Indian travellers to make seamless payments abroad. *—PTI*

Pvt sector is pushing external debt: RBI

MUMBAI, 30 JUNE

India's external debt rose to USD 762.8 billion at the end of March 2026, driven mainly by higher borrowings from the private sector, despite a decline in government debt, according to the RBI.

The debt increased by USD 26.3 billion from March 2025.

The RBI noted, "Outstanding debt of the general government decreased, while non-government debt increased at end-March 2026 over the level a year ago," with corporates, banks, and financial institutions as primary contributors.

Non-financial corporations accounted for 36.4 per cent of the debt, followed by deposit-taking corporations at 26.5 per cent, and the general government at 22.0 per cent.

The external debt-to-GDP ratio rose to 20.8 per cent from 19.8 per cent. The dollar remained the dominant currency at 55.5 per cent, with loans the largest component at 34.7 per cent. *—ANI*

Taxpayers can file appeal before GSTAT till 31 July

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The government on Tuesday extended by a month the deadline for filing appeals before the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT), pushing it to 31 July from the original Tuesday cutoff.

The ministry said it extended the deadline after receiving representations from stakeholders citing technical difficulties in filing appeals due to heavy traffic on the GSTAT portal. In the last 15 days alone, 30,000 appeals were filed, with daily volumes peaking at 5,500.

The government has already notified 31 state benches of GSTAT, and one Principal Bench located at Delhi. Over 4.80 lakh cases are pending before the appellate authority, and all these cases are expected to be filed before GSTAT.

Since the 2017 GST rollout, tax disputes have been routed through High Courts or the Supreme Court, causing severe delays in resolution. The operationalisation of GSTAT in September 2025 is expected to fast-track this process. *—PTI*

- The government has extended the GSTAT appeal deadline after reports of web portal technical difficulties.

USERNAME SELECTION ROLLS OUT

WhatsApp to allow chat without sharing phone number

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

WhatsApp has begun rolling out reservations for its long-awaited optional username feature, allowing users to connect with without sharing their phone numbers.

The privacy-focused update will be introduced gradually over the coming months, with users able to reserve their preferred usernames before the feature officially launches.

"Starting this week, you can reserve a username to use later this year when we launch this feature. With over three billion people on WhatsApp a lot of names overlap, which is why we're opening reservations early so everyone can select the username that matters to them," WhatsApp said.

According to WhatsApp, the feature gives users greater privacy control by hiding phone numbers when they message a person or business for the first time. To prevent unwanted contact, there will be no public username directory or search suggestions, and users can optionally enable a username key, before someone can message them.

Creators, businesses and organisations will also be able to claim the same username they already use on Instagram or Facebook, helping maintain a consistent identity across Meta's platforms.

Usernames, can be up to 35 characters long and include letters, numbers, dots and underscores, can be changed or removed at any time.

To reserve one, users should update WhatsApp to the latest version, open Settings, tap Account, and select Username. The feature is rolling out in phases, and users will receive an in-app notification once it becomes available in their country. *—ANI*

PARAGUAY SENDS Germany out of World Cup

FOXBOROUGH, 30 JUNE

Jose Canale scored on the first sudden death penalty kick, Orlando Gill made two key saves in the shootout, and Paraguay beat Germany 4-3 on penalties on Monday to earn the biggest upset of the 2026 World Cup so far.

The Round of 32 match ended 1-1 after extra time. Paraguay took the lead when Julio Enciso scored on a header late in the first half, but Kai Havertz equalized in the 52nd minute for four-time champion Germany.

"We had to analyze every player, every detail. Thanks to that I was able to only miss two penalties," Gill said afterward. "This is for all the people of Paraguay."

Paraguay, ranked 34th by FIFA, is the deepest betting long shot to win a World Cup match and did it against 12th-ranked Germany. The Paraguayans will next face the winner of Tuesday's match between France and Sweden in the Round of 16 on Saturday in Philadelphia. A win in that match would land them back in Foxborough for a quarterfinal match on 9 July. I think we deserved one more game and to be honest considering everything that was said, everything we went through," Canale said. "What I want to highlight from our team is how united we are. ... Today was a game we really needed to show our true colors."

Germany had won six of seven penalty shootouts in major tournaments, including six straight since losing to Czechs in the 1976 European final. In the only previous World Cup match between the teams, Germany beat Paraguay 1-0 in the Round of 16 at the 2002 tournament. Nearly 25 years later, Paraguay has its revenge. —*ANI*

We messed it up: Kimmich

WASHINGTON, 30 JUNE

Another World Cup, another early exit.

Germany should be getting used to disappointment, but it doesn't make it any less painful for a traditional soccer heavy-weight that had been ten-tatively hoping for a fifth World Cup title to restore lost pride.

Germany managed to survive the group stage for the first time since winning the trophy in 2014, but it's little consolation after Monday's loss to unheralded Paraguay on penalties sent the team home after the first knockout game."We messed it up," Kimmich told reporters after the match in Foxborough.

It was a familiar feeling for the Germany captain who also struggled for explanations after the team's group-stage exit at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. "As a child, when you watched the team during tournaments, it was always semifinals, finals, or world champions. You grew up with that, cheering them on," the 31-year-old Kimmich said on Monday, when he apologized for the team failing to meet expectations. —*PTI*

Japan faces heartbreak again as Brazil scores late

HOUSTON, 30 JUNE

The heartbreak was all too familiar for Japan at the World Cup.

The country's national team hung in until the very end of Monday but was eliminated from the tournament — the third straight time Japan has had the lead in the knockout round and lost. This year, it was to five-time champion Brazil 2-1 on a late goal in injury time.

After four previous losses in such matches at World Cups, Japan is still searching for its first knockout victory.

"We were not able to achieve our goal this time, but then we can aim for the next World Cup or maybe even one after that," Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu said through a translator. "We should work toward that goal, which is what we've been doing."

Four years ago, Japan led early but eventually fell to Croatia on penalty kicks in the round of 16. The Samurai Blue suffered a similar fate in the same round in 2018 when they led Belgium 2-0 in the second half but lost 3-2 on a stoppage time goal. "I don't think history would be gentle to us," Moriyasu said. "But if we are to overcome today maybe we will see a time where history will change."

Things looked good early for Japan on Monday. Kaishu Sano put his team ahead in the 29th minute, but Casemiro equalized on a header in the 56th and Gabriel Martinelli scored the winning goal late in injury time.

Japan goalkeeper Zion Suzuki finished with four saves. He declined to answer questions in English after the tough loss despite a strong showing against one of the best teams in the world.

Japan has only beaten Brazil once in 15 matches, with two games ending in draws. The lone victory came in a friendly in October. "The gap between us is closing now," Moriyasu said. "Brazil is a top-tier team and we're definitely approaching that level."

Then he mentioned the loss in Qatar four years ago before adding: "We have to up our game." —*PTI*

NETHERLANDS, MOROCCO DEADLOCKED AT 1-1 IN ROUND OF 32

GUADALUPE , 30 JUNE

The Netherlands and Morocco were deadlocked 1-1 heading into extra time in the World Cup Round of 32.

Cody Gakpo scored in the 72nd minute for the Dutch. After the goal, which was assisted by Crysencio Summerville, the Dutch bench ran onto the field to embrace the 27-year-old Gakpo, who broke down in tears. Gakpo and his partner, Noa van der Bij, recently announced that they lost their unborn child.

Morocco's Issa Diop tied it in the 91st minute, heading in a cross from Chemsdine Talbi.

The teams entered with the highest combined ranking of any Round of 32 match. Morocco was sixth in the world and the Netherlands were seventh.

FANS FIGHTPOLICE

Meanwhile, back in the home country soccer fans clashed with police in The Hague and celebrated in Casablanca after Morocco sent the Netherlands to its earliest World Cup exit, eliminating the Dutch on penalties on Monday night.

The Netherlands has a sizable Moroccan community and fans of the Morocco soccer team were in a festive mood after the win, though sporadic clashes also erupted.

Police in The Hague said "heavy fireworks were set off" in the Schilderswijk district, and that police officers were pelted with fireworks and stones. Riot squads charged the crowd and used a water cannon to break up the gathering. "A few individuals have been arrested for committing open violence," police said.

As the penalty shootout reached its climax, the tense silence inside a coffee shop popular with fans in Casablanca gave way to a deafening roar when Ismael Saibari buried the decisive spot kick, sending his team into the Round of 16. — PTI

US trying to avoid exit from World Cup knockout rounds

NEW YORK, 30 JUNE

Getting to the knockout rounds of the World Cup is nothing new for the United States. But that's usually where the US make an exit.

Wednesday's match against Bosnia-Herzegovina in Santa Clara, marks the eighth time the US has played in an elimination round in 12 World Cups. But only once, in 2002, have the Americans a won a match in the knockout rounds. Because this year's tournament was expanded to 48 teams, the first knockout round includes 32 teams, creating an extra round of elimination play. — PTI

A LOOK AT US' LIMITED SUCCESS IN KNOCKOUT MATCHES:

URUGUAY, 1930: Semifinals. The first World Cup was played with 13 teams and the US advanced straight to the semifinals as winner of its group. That's where the Americans' tournament ended with a 6-1 loss to Argentina.

ITALY, 1934: One and done. The second edition of the World Cup was the only tournament that did not use groups for the early matches. Instead, all 16 teams played a straight knockout format. The US was immediately eliminated with a 7-1 loss to host and eventual champion Italy.

US, 1994: Round of 16. The US didn't qualify for the World Cup from 1954 through 1986, was eliminated in the group stage in 1990 and then got an automatic bid as the host nation in '94. A 1-1 tie with Switzerland and shocking 2-1 victory over Colombia in the Rose Bowl in the group stage earned the Americans a match against Brazil in the knockout round. Brazil won the fourth World Cup title that year.

SOUTH KOREA-JAPAN, 2002: Quarterfinals. The best US showing in the modern era of the tournament. An upset of European heavyweight Portugal and a draw with co-host South Korea sent the Americans to the knockout round against regional rival Mexico. The US run ended in the next match with a tense 1-0 loss to eventual finalist Germany.

SOUTH AFRICA, 2010: Round of 16. Donovan's frantic, last-minute goal against Algeria secured a dramatic 1-0 victory in the final group match that sent the US to the next round. Facing Ghana, the US went down 1-0 after just five minutes..

BRAZIL, 2014: Round of 16. The US advanced out of the group stage with a 2-1 win over Ghana, a 2-2 draw with Portugal and a 1-0 loss to eventual champion Germany. Their tournament ended with a 2-1 loss to Belgium.

QATAR, 2022: Round of 16. The United States started group play with draws with Wales and England, and advanced with a 1-0 win over Iran on Christian Pulisic's goal. The Netherlands then made quick work of the United States, winning 3-1. —*PTI*

'TRY AGAIN NEXT WORLD CUP' NEYMAR TROLLS GERMAN ECONOMIST

TEXAS, 30 JUNE

Neymar may not have stepped onto the pitch, but he ensured he remained in the spotlight after Brazil's thrilling 2-1 comeback win over Japan in the FIFA World Cup 2026 Round of 32.

After the match, the Brazilian forward posted a cheeky response on social media X to German economist Joachim Klement, whose statistical model had predicted Japan would knock Brazil out.

Neymar wrote on X, "Sr. Joachim klement ... favor tentar na proxima copa," roughly translating to, "Mr Joachim Klement... please try again at the next World Cup." —*ANI*

Sooryavanshi in focus as India seek strong start against England

CHESTER-LE-STREET, 30 JUNE

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's eagerly-awaited debut and the thoroughly exposed batting frailties on challenging wickets dominate the discourse on India as they take on England in a five-match T20 International series starting here on Wednesday.

India's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate has said that Sooryavanshi will have to "go through the process and bide his time" like any other cricketer to get a place in the eleven. At the same time, he had no hesitation in declaring that the 15-year-old swashbuckler seems ready for the grind. But it remains to be seen whether the management will hold firm on its resolve that Sooryavanshi must follow the process amid the growing clamour to blood the explosive hitter.

Ten Doeschate was candid enough to admit that there is disbelief in the camp after being whitewashed 0-2 by Ireland last week and it could well become the trigger for drastic action.

The twin failure of Sanju Samson against Ireland offers them a perfect excuse to bench the opener and pair Sooryavanshi with Abhishek Sharma, who could be saved by that 20-ball 49 in the first T20I at Belfast.

But then the inclusion of Sooryavanshi alone should not be viewed as a quick fix to India's batting travails, which have many contours.

None of the Indian batters looked comfortable in conditions at Belfast that offered considerable assistance to pacers. They looked like fishes out of the pond once routes to aggressive batting were blocked by conditions and spot-on Irish bowlers.

England's batting line-up too has some powerhouses in skipper Harry Brook, Jos Buttler, Jordan Cox, Jacob Bethell, Will Jacks, Phil Salt and Tom Banton. India will require a more organised effort from bowlers, particularly spinners -- Axar Patel, Shedge and Washington Sundar -- who have so far been largely ineffective. —*PTI*

Harmanpreet to captain India at Asiad

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Harmanpreet Kaur was on Tuesday retained as captain of a largely predictable 15-member India squad for this year's Asian Games in Japan despite the side's earlier than expected exit from the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in England. The Indian team's World Cup campaign ended on Sunday after a group stage loss to Australia.

The Asian Games is scheduled to be held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan from 19 September to 4 October. The team will enter the Asian Games as defending champions, having won the gold medal at the event's previous edition in Hangzhou, China in 2023. Smriti Mandhana will continue to be Harmanpreet's deputy. The 37-year-old Harmanpreet, under whom India won the women's ODI World Cup last year, is facing criticism for the underwhelming show in England.

Wicketkeeper-batter Yastika Bhatia is the only player to be dropped from the World Cup squad and in her place, G Kamalini has been drafted into the side.

All-rounder Shreyanka Patil, who was ruled out with an ankle injury in the middle of the World Cup, has been included in the squad but her availability will be subject to fitness clearance.

Harmanpreet will be supported in the batting lineup by Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues and Richa Ghosh, while the bowling responsibilities will largely be shouldered by Deepti Sharma, Renuka Singh, Shree Charani, Arundhati Reddy and Nandni Sharma. —*PTI*

Gukesh, Praggs lead Indian challenge at Rapid and Blitz

ZAGREB, 30 JUNE

World champion D Gukesh might have taken a sabbatical from classical chess but his commitment to major events remains intact and he will be up against some of the world's best players in the Zagreb Rapid and Blitz Tournament beginning here on Wednesday.

The event is part of the Grand Chess Tour or GCT, which is the biggest platform to bring together top players. This will be the third event under the GCT brand this year with three more to come.

This event will also feature Indian star R Praggnanandhaa, who is fresh from his victory at the Norway Chess ahead of world number one Carlsen.

The event will feature nine rounds of rapid and 18 rounds of blitz chess. The reigning world champion has to defend his title against Javokhir SIndarov later this year and opinions are split as to who would come out on top.

Despite saying no to main events, Gukesh has committed to playing the rapid and blitz sections as wild card. —*PTI*

WIMBLEDON TOURNAMENT

Serena's return is 'the ticket to have'

LONDON, 30 JUNE

Anticipation is building at Wimbledon for Serena Williams' first singles match in nearly four years.

The 44-year-old Williams is scheduled to play an opponent less than half her age, 20-year-old Maya Joint of Australia, in the third match Tuesday on Centre Court — the patch of grass where the American standout won seven of her 23 Grand Slam singles titles.

"I think everyone's feeling the same way: Cannot wait to be watching Serena back on Centre Court again," Sally Bolton, the chief executive of the All England Club, said Monday.

Wimbledon organizers took the unusual step of holding up an eighth and final wild card spot for Williams until she accepted the invitation at almost the last possible moment the weekend before qualifying began.

"We were all sitting there sort of quietly keeping our fingers crossed that that's what would happen," Bolton said when asked how anxious the club was while Williams pondered her decision. "She is such an icon of the sport and particularly here at the championship she's one of our most special champions," Bolton added. "So it really will be the ticket to have tomorrow when she walks back on Centre Court."

Whether it was related to Williams or not, the queue (line) of would-be-spectators camping out overnight for the daily batches of Wimbledon tickets on offer had reached 10,000 people by Monday morning. "We are advising people if they haven't already set off to travel, not to travel because the queue is effectively full," Bolton said. "By comparison to last year, it is really busy."

Serena Williams will also play doubles with older sister Venus Williams later in the week. —*PTI*